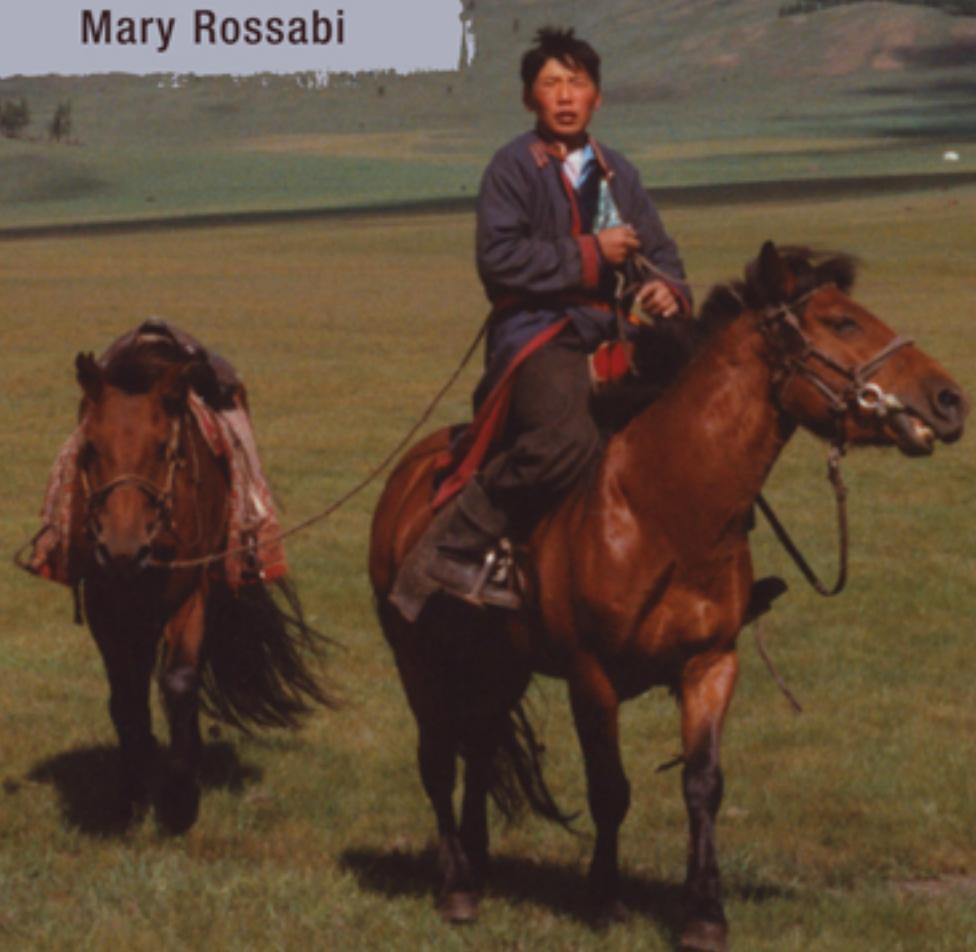


# HERDSMAN TO STATESMAN

*The Autobiography of  
Jamsrangiin Sambuu  
of Mongolia*

INTRODUCED AND EDITED BY  
**Morris Rossabi**

TRANSLATED BY  
**Mary Rossabi**



# **Herdsman to Statesman**



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# Prefatory Note

I have endeavored to stay as close as possible to the Mongolian text except when I felt some modifications of the original were necessary for English readers. Since many of Sambuu's sentences are extremely long, I have broken some of them up for greater clarity. On occasion, I was tempted to interpret what I thought the author was saying "between the lines." However, I resisted doing so and focused on the text itself.

Enkhjargal Batjargal, Bat-Erdene Baatar, and Tunga Ganbold have kindly gone over parts of the text, and their suggestions have been most helpful. Bolor Legjeem carefully reviewed the book when it was completed and clarified several passages. I thank them for their diligence and, as important, their friendship.

I am also grateful to Professor Veronika Veit, who sent me a copy of Sambuu's autobiography and urged me to translate it.

Mary Rossabi



# Jamsrangiin Sambuu and His Autobiography: *Paths of Life*

*Morris Rossabi*

## INTRODUCTION

Jamsrangiin Sambuu's autobiography, *Paths of Life*, which has been translated in this volume, covers his life and career through the Korean War (1950–1953) but not his later involvement in the highest echelons of Mongolian government. His position as chair of the Presidium of the Mongolian Peoples' Republic (hereafter MPR), which he held from 1954 until his death in 1972, may have left him little time to pursue his writing.

Or perhaps, to offer another explanation, he did not wish to be entangled in the struggles concerning the Sino–Soviet dispute, the most contentious issue in the communist world at that time. Chinese and Russian divisions about ideology, territory, economic models, and relations with the West, especially the United States, had flared up no later than 1957 and had reverberations in Mongolia. As Sambuu began to write in the early 1960s, the Mongolian government had decided to ally itself with the Soviet Union instead of with China, with which it had had harmonious political and economic relations since 1950. In 1962, dissenters from this policy had been dismissed or exiled. The first part of Sambuu's autobiography was published in 1965 and the second part in 1970, a short time after this purge, and the future of Sino–Soviet–Mongolian relations remained unclear. Sambuu was a cautious man, perhaps the secret of his survival as a leading figure over a span of almost forty years. Why stake out a position when the future remained unclear? He writes less than a paragraph about the establishment of the People's Republic of China and Mongolian relations with the new communist state. Yet he lavishes praise on the Soviet Union from his earliest

encounters with Russians to his tenure as ambassador to the Soviet Union during World War II to the postwar assistance it provided to Mongolia.

Indeed, the autobiography's omission of his later years may not be a great loss. Sambuu's descriptions of his early life offer genuine and unaffected portraits of his joys and mostly his struggles under an oppressive system. His vignettes convey a sense of the hardships ordinary Mongolian herders faced in the early part of the twentieth century. His diction is straightforward and not riddled with slogans. He appears to be interested in describing the particular rather than fostering an ideological agenda. However, when he turns to communism and begins to climb the bureaucratic ladder in a communist Mongolia, his writing changes appreciably. It becomes formulaic, with stereotypical phrases (e.g., the Soviet Union as the "elder brother" and Mongolia as the "younger brother," "Left deviationism") dominating. He presents or follows the propaganda line enunciated by the Mongolian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (hereafter MPRP), the dominant force in Mongolia from its founding in 1924 through Sambuu's death in 1972 and then on to 1990. To be sure, Sambuu offers intriguing details about the politics of the period from the 1920s through the early 1950s. Even his omissions and his rationalizations for the repeated shifts in his own political positions in order to avoid responsibility for policies condemned by the MPRP show much about his ability to survive under this system.

One other omission is also revealing. Although Sambuu writes about his mother and especially his father, he scarcely mentions his wife. He explains the two families' charming marital negotiations and their colorful marriage ceremonies but does not describe his wife's appearance, nor does he allude to her personality and her role in his life. His book does not cite her career. Was she literate? Did she work? Did she accompany him on all his travels? Similarly, he scarcely mentions his children. What were they like? Were they in the Soviet Union during his approximately nine-year tenure as ambassador? What kind of education did they receive? His family life, which would have offered greater insight about his personality, is simply unrecorded. Revelations of self were of secondary importance for him and for many Mongolians of his time.<sup>1</sup> Only because of interviews with his grandson did we learn much about Sambuu's wife.

It is difficult to conjure up the nineteenth-century world into which Sambuu was born and spent his early life. The territory in which he lived

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1. Owen Lattimore, "From Serf to Sage: The Life and Work of Jamsrangiin Sambuu," *Journal of the Anglo-Mongolian Society* 3, no. 1 (December 1976): 1–23, wrote a laudatory account of Sambuu's early life, without dealing with his career as an ambassador to the Soviet Union and North Korea and his service in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Lattimore winds up by writing that "what stands out in Sambuu's writing is the man's humanity" and "I hope that I have been able to preserve something of the echo of this great but also complex man" (22–23). Lattimore does not mention any negative features of Sambuu's rise to power.

was immense and scarcely populated. Living in the twenty-first century, globalized world where space is at a premium, the concept of the vast and relatively empty lands during Sambuu's childhood is almost unfathomable. The population amounted to about half a million people, most of whom lived in the countryside and were separated by considerable distances. Urga (earlier known as Ikh Khüree), the capital, consisted of about thirty thousand to forty thousand people, approximately one-half of whom were lamas and five thousand of whom were Chinese traders or artisans.<sup>2</sup> A few other towns, which were established for commercial, administrative, or religious purposes, had even smaller populations. Herders, including Sambuu's family, led a relatively isolated existence, camping with family and close friends and then moving with them in semianual or sometimes quarterly peregrinations to fresh pastures and sources of water. This isolation magnified the significance of the postal relay system, which figures prominently in Sambuu's autobiography. Maintenance of postal relay stations was vital in facilitating transmission of official messages (and thus both government effectiveness and control), trade, and other kinds of relations and exchanges. Yet such maintenance imposed severe burdens on the poor, who served as corvée laborers or messengers or herders of the camels, horses, and other animals at the stations or provided the supplies required at these valuable halting places.<sup>3</sup>

## EARLY YEARS

In this isolated environment, Sambuu was born in 1895 in Büren *sum* of Töv *aimag* (or province) to a herding family. He implied in his autobiography that his family was poor, but his grandson S. Surenjav, whom Sambuu adopted as his son after the death of Sambuu's daughter, his only blood-related child, told us in a recent interview that his grandfather came from a midlevel or perhaps even fairly prosperous family background.<sup>4</sup> His father Lodon Jamsrang certainly taught him the techniques of herding, and Sambuu did not write about his own hunger or other serious deprivations.<sup>5</sup>

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2. Robert Doebler, "Cities, Population Redistribution, and Urbanization in Mongolia: 1918–1990," PhD diss., Indiana University 1994, 40–41.

3. As one specialist notes, "One of the most terrifying services was the duty of the commoners who were not personal serfs to serve at one of the postal relay stations; it could be a terrifying one since they had to move and live among strangers and serve travelling officials. The commoners provided their own livestock, manpower and property without any compensation, and officially supplied the feudal lords' communication services." See M. Sanjdorj, *Manchu Chinese Colonial Rule in Northern Mongolia*, trans. Urgunge Onon. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 2.

4. Interview with S. Surenjav, Ulaan Baatar, April 24, 2009.

5. Charles R. Bawden, *The Modern History of Mongolia* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 181.

Yet he described poor families stealing from others in order to survive. He never had to stoop to such acts of betrayal.<sup>6</sup>

Indeed, his autobiography portrayed a striving family seeking to ascend the ladder of success. Why else would his father at first have willingly acquiesced and permitted Sambuu to live with a *taij* (or nobleman) in order to learn to read and write? Literacy would not necessarily be so vital for a herder. Delivered by his father to the *taij*'s office, Sambuu anticipated instruction in the Mongolian script and language. Instead, the harsh and demanding *taij* compelled him to herd his animals and did not offer payment for his work. He also did not teach Sambuu to read. Betrayed by his overlord, Sambuu learned to read only through his own efforts and persistence and through the help of sympathetic clerks in the *taij*'s office.

Many of the early sections of Sambuu's book deal with the exploitation that characterized Mongolian society in the early twentieth century. Qing China, a dynasty ruled by Manchus, had gained control over Mongolia in 1691 and had used local princes and nobles and Buddhist lamas to maintain a harsh and oppressive system. Sambuu noted repeated floggings of underlings for the most minor of infractions. These beatings, which were administered by the *taij* or his guards or by Chinese and Manchu officials, took place in government offices and at postal relay stations. Some of the physical abuse Sambuu witnessed and then described reveal random cruelty, unrelated to any crime or offense, but they were designed to intimidate. For example, a sick Tangut man was simply allowed to die without efforts to treat his ailments, and a nobleman ordered an underling to toss him out with the garbage. He writes of these excesses, "Many people, exhausted and suffering, were treated like stray dogs and thrown away to die." Such harshness was used to instill fear and to persuade Mongolians to obey princes or nobles.

Ironically, Mongolia faced a shortage of labor, which should have translated into good treatment of laborers. Sambuu's narrative challenged that interpretation. The question that arises is how pervasive was this mistreatment and physical abuse. Sambuu implied that the physical abuse was normal, which was attested to by other sources.<sup>7</sup> In addition, he stated that the nobles, on occasion, deprived herders of their animals, forced the poor

6. J. Sambuu, *Am'drlyn Zammalaas* [Paths of Life] (Ulaan Baatar: State Publishing Group, 1965 and 1970), 31.

7. Joseph Fletcher wrote in John Fairbank, ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 10: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 353, "There was little that ordinary Mongols could do to protect themselves against the growing exactions that banner princes, monasteries, and Han creditors imposed upon them. Those unable to meet the demands could take flight. . . . When banner authorities caught such fugitives, they meted out severe punishments. In one case, for example, sixty-nine defaulters were put in cangues and passed around the banner for two years from tent to tent. Since the cangues were too wide to fit through the tent doors, the prisoners had to spend their nights in the open, in the horrible winter cold."

to pay for their own gambling debts, placed their own sometimes incompetent or lazy sons in government posts, imposed arbitrary exactions or assignments on ordinary people, and left the poor with mere scraps of food and hardly any rice or flour.

In particular, Chinese merchants or officials whom Sambuu accused of abusing ordinary Mongolians or instigating floggings earned his hostility. On several occasions, he offered examples of the power of Chinese merchants who had a privileged position, partly because China controlled Mongolia. Much of their dominance was also due to their status as creditors. Many ordinary Mongolians (or *arad*) and nobles had become indebted to Chinese merchants who provided loans at prohibitively high rates of interest to herders to buy essential goods and to nobles to purchase luxury products. The merchants used their superior economic positions to secure leverage and to inflict punishments on debtors who were in arrears. Like many present-day Mongolians, Sambuu disliked what he perceived to be shrewd, avaricious, and exploitative Chinese merchants.

He exhibited similar scorn for Buddhist lamas. Portraying them as superstitious and ill educated, he accused them of exploiting and cheating gullible Mongolians. He disparaged their effectiveness in healing the ailing and was contemptuous of a lama's claim of having cured the young Sambuu himself after a virulent and long-lasting sickness. Sambuu had greater faith in herders' remedies such as the use of ice from snow, boiled water, and sugar to treat food poisoning or a mixture including rhubarb for foot infections. He was appalled at the Buddhists' expropriation of funds for the building of a huge statue of the Maitreya Buddha, especially considering the parlous conditions facing most Mongolian herdsmen. His most damning indictment of the monks involved their behavior after his father's death in 1929. His father had instructed Sambuu to distribute his assets equally among educational institutions, medical organizations, and a Buddhist monastery. The local lamas asserted that his father's soul would remain in limbo and would not be reborn in a paradise unless the family gave them additional funds to pray for him. Such profiteering contributed to Sambuu's antipathy toward lamas, an attitude that persisted and helped him tolerate the later communist purge and execution of monks in the 1930s.<sup>8</sup>

However, his autobiography was not limited to bitter critiques of people and institutions. He also rhapsodized about the pastoral life and reveled in its purity and beauty despite its hardships. Recognizing that herding was demanding and required great knowledge, he lavished considerable praise

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8. For other views of Buddhism in Mongolia and its impact, see Larry Moses, *The Political Role of Mongol Buddhism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Uralic Altaic Series 133, 1977), 124–43. For the self-definitions of the Buddhist establishment, see Johan Elverskog, *Our Great Qing: The Mongols, Buddhism, and the State in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 128–34 and 159–65.

on his father and others who had developed the skills required for successful management of animals. Even hazardous encounters with wolves or cold and snowy winters (known as *zuds*) failed to deter him from his desired association with the herding life. Naturally, he recognized the drudgery and difficult lifestyle and repeatedly sought leaves of absence from the office work assigned to him after he became literate in order to assist his aging herding parents. Yet his enthusiasm for this outdoor life was palpable. Later in life, he would compile an invaluable guide to herding that became the most important such book of instructions.

His love of family and of the herding life translated into acquiescence to traditional customs. For example, he abided by the system of arranged marriage. His father and another herder agreed to a match for him, which was cemented by Sambuu's family offering a male camel, a gelding horse, and several sheep as a bride price. Sambuu implied that his new in-laws were ordinary herders, but his grandson or adopted son informed us that his prospective father-in-law was a well-known lama.<sup>9</sup> Sambuu was twenty-three years old and his bride-to-be Nyamaa was sixteen years old when they were betrothed. Both followed the traditional marital ceremonies. Wearing a new *deel* (long robe) with a white crepe veil over her face, the bride paid respect to the Fire Deity, which she feared, and then outside her prospective father-in-law's *ger* (tent) offered incense and butter in front of a representation of the Buddha. She and Sambuu then prostrated themselves before the Buddha.<sup>10</sup> The next morning the old men and women assembled and gave the bride, who was still veiled, a saddle and a bridle trimmed in silver and a horse. She and Sambuu then rode off to the *ger* that their parents had constructed for them. A couple of women, abiding by traditional marital rituals, accompanied them and stayed with them for the first three days of their marriage.

By the time of his marriage, Sambuu had lived through turbulent times. The despised Qing dynasty had collapsed in 1911, offering Mongolians a superb opportunity to break away from China and to establish an independent state. A Russian official had described Mongolians' earlier dependence on China: "It was difficult at that time to find . . . a Mongol who was not in debt to a Chinese merchant or Chinese trading firm; just as seldom was a prince found who was not completely entangled in long-term obligations to the Chinese . . . the great majority of the herds of cattle, sheep and goats, the droves of horses and camels, did not constitute property of the Mongols; they had been transferred into the hands of the Chinese, and the Mongols only tended and watched them."<sup>11</sup> Numerous Chinese lived in Mongo-

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9. Interview with S. Surenjav, Ulaan Baatar, April 24, 2009.

10. Sechin Jagchid and Paul Hyer, *Mongolia's Culture and Society* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979), 81–95.

11. Robert Rupen, *Mongols of the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Series, 37, pt. 1, 1964), 59.

lia and had constructed many of the buildings (including monasteries) in the capital, provided invaluable goods and services, mined gold and coal, loaned money, and fashioned many of the household goods.<sup>12</sup> The Qing's downfall meant that Mongolia could take charge of its own affairs, and an Autonomous Government, under the leadership of the Bogdo Gegen (or Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu), or head of the Buddhists, was established. The failures of the Autonomous Government, which endured until 1919, are well known, and Sambuu, still young and lacking exposure to politics, had little new to add to the accepted view of these years.<sup>13</sup>

In retrospect, Sambuu emphasized the chaos of the Autonomous period, alluding to disunity among the Mongol secular leaders as well as the Buddhist hierarchy and to the intimidating, if not threatening, notes that Yuan Shikai, the president of the Chinese Republic, sent to the Bogdo Gegen. He did not mention the murder, by poisoning, of some of the most important Khans. Nor did he discuss tsarist Russia's reluctance to support Mongolian aspirations for independence. Russia had helped negotiate the Treaty of Kiakhta of 1915, which laid down an ambiguous definition of Sino-Mongolian relations by proclaiming that Mongolia would be autonomous but under Chinese suzerainty. In theory, the Autonomous Government would take charge of domestic affairs, while China would be responsible for international relations. With his visceral dislike for the Chinese merchants and officials he met, Sambuu would surely have disapproved of this treaty, as well as one of the provisions extending the privilege of extraterritoriality to Chinese in Mongolia.<sup>14</sup> Bearing in mind his antipathy for lamas, he doubtless would have been critical of turning over secular authority to the Bogdo Gegen, who already presided over an institution that controlled one-fourth of the country's livestock and that consisted of about 91,000 lamas or about one-third to one-half of the male population.

His autobiography confirmed two features of the Autonomous period's almost decade-long existence. One was the desire of some Mongolian leaders to seek U.S. support in fending off Chinese and Japanese control. Nationalists who feared both Russia and China or those who later opposed the Soviet Union's involvement in the country believed that stronger ties with the United States would protect Mongolia. They were to be disappointed because the United States had other, more pressing concerns.<sup>15</sup> A second development Sambuu mentioned is the pan-Mongolian movement.

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12. Rupen, *Mongols of the Twentieth Century*, 87–88.

13. For additional details, see Thomas Ewing, *Between the Hammer and the Anvil? Chinese and Russian Policies in Outer Mongolia, 1911–1921* (Bloomington: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana University, 1980).

14. Rupen, *Mongols of the Twentieth Century*, 61–71.

15. For one description of U.S. policy, see Alicia Campi, "The Political Relationship between the United States and Outer Mongolia, 1915–1927: The Kalgan Consular Records," PhD diss., Indiana University, 1988.

He appeared to have known about efforts to create a Greater Mongolia. However, internal strife among the Khalkha Mongolians in Mongolia and the Inner Mongolians, as well as tsarist Russia's opposition, doomed the prospects of a united Mongolian state. Barga, the Mongolian-inhabited region of Manchuria, also became embroiled in the controversies, further subverting the pan-Mongolian movement.<sup>16</sup> Sambuu omitted mention of Buryat Mongolians who would play an important role in Mongolia. He blamed the failures of the pan-Mongolian movement mostly on the ineffectiveness of the Autonomous Government.

### SAMBUU AS AN OFFICIAL

Sambuu himself assumed greater responsibilities and higher positions throughout the Autonomous period. His literacy and his mathematical abilities offered significant opportunities when such skills were in short supply and at a premium. Starting as a clerk at the *taij*'s office, he moved to an accounting position in the government. When the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, with the assistance of troops from the Soviet Union, gained control of the country in 1921, he was recruited into the Ministry of Finance. He wrote a mercifully brief account of the chaos that enveloped Mongolia from 1917 to 1921. Recording the exploits of Chinese commander/warlords such as Xu Shuzeng, Japanese-supported leaders, and the Bogdo Gegen, he was, in particular, overjoyed at the defeat, capture, and execution of the brutal and autocratic Baron Ungern Sternberg, who briefly occupied and terrorized Urga in the spring of 1921.<sup>17</sup> He did not mention his own specific role in the socialist revolution, but he sufficiently impressed its leaders to earn an important post in the Ministry of Finance.

His description of the years prior to the attempted collectivization of 1928–1929 followed the official MPRP line. He condemned purged leaders for betraying the party and for their rightist views and appeared to sanction the executions of Premier Dogsomin Bodoo (1885–1922) and Minister of Finance Khorloo Danzan (1873–1924) as "nationalists" and "counterrevolutionaries." In writing about the Great Khural (or Parliament) sessions of September 1925 and November 1927, he described rightists or counterrevolutionaries who had to be criticized and weeded out. One of their so-called crimes entailed attempts to create a rift be-

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16. See Lan Mei-hua, "The Mongolian Independence Movement of 1911: A Pan-Mongolian Endeavor," PhD diss., Harvard University, 1996, and Udo Barkmann, *Geschichte der Mongolei* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1999), 101–61 for additional details about the pan-Mongolian movement and the Autonomous period during that time.

17. See the recent popular account of his career: *The Bloody White Baron* by James Palmer (New York: Basic Books, 2008).

tween the MPR, the new government as of 1924, and the Soviet Union. He did not entertain the idea that they might have been patriots fearful of Soviet domination. By this time, he addressed the Soviet Union as the “elder brother” and Mongolia as the “younger brother,” a dictum that would shape his career. His ideological blinders prompted him to portray V. Lenin as a member of the proletariat when the Soviet leader actually derived from the professional and well-educated classes. In any event, he concluded that the younger brother profited so much from the relationship with the elder brother that he ought to be grateful and not challenge his benefactor. Neither did he openly criticize the institution of the Bogdo Gegen. When the Eighth Bogdo Gegen died in 1924, the MPRP ensured that no other reincarnation would be found. That same year, a constitution was promulgated that distinguished between the secular and the religious and curbed, if not totally vitiated, the Buddhist establishment’s political authority. With his decidedly anticlerical views, Sambuu did not lament the erosion of Buddhist power.

Meanwhile, his career continued on an upward path. In June 1926, the Ministry of Finance promoted him to head accountant for state receipts and expenditures, a vital position in the new government. Aware of the regime’s precarious finances, he sought policies that would lead to additional revenues. He advocated a tax increase on foreigners, specifically the Chinese, who, he believed, exploited Mongolia. In October 1928, the Seventh Khural agreed with him and expelled most of the Chinese in order to achieve independence from foreign capital and trade.<sup>18</sup>

However, the Seventh Khural’s most significant decision was the development of radical policies. It sanctioned both imposition of higher taxes on and confiscation of the property and animals of the nobles, the lamas, and supposedly rich herders as well as greater economic planning and collectivization of the herds. However, because the Khural did not create clear distinctions between rich herders and “middle-class” herders, local officials, on occasion, expropriated the animals of relatively modest families, enraging much of the rural population.

This more radical policy imitated the Soviet Union’s collectivization and destruction of the kulak class and the state takeover of private industry and trade. In May 1929, P. Genden (d. 1937), who later became prime minister, dispatched Sambuu to the modern province (*aimag*) of Arkhangai to implement this leftist policy and instructed him to confiscate property within twenty days. By 1930, he was on the Executive Committee of the Central and South Gobi *aimags*. Sambuu investigated the lords, lamas, and reputedly rich herders and, with great enthusiasm, confiscated their assets. He

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18. Irina Morozova, *Socialist Revolutions in Asia: The Social History of Mongolia in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 2009), 70–76.

also met with ordinary herders to explain the transition to collectives, starting with the animals he had requisitioned from the nobles and lamas. He encountered considerable herder resistance. Many herdsmen could not understand the policy and opposed collectives and, at the same time, believed that the expropriation of the lamas', nobles', and supposedly rich herders' wealth upset the natural order to which they were accustomed. Adding to the confusion was the MPRP's egalitarianism, which entailed recruitment of poor and often illiterate herders into administrative positions for which they were unqualified.<sup>19</sup> In his autobiography, Sambuu criticized this policy as ineffective and counterproductive. As he often did, he also blamed lamas for spreading untrue rumors about the government's so-called nefarious objectives in initiating collectives.

The ensuing chaos led to a reversal of policy in 1932, a change that could have damaged Genden's and Sambuu's reputations. Instead, Genden suddenly became a staunch advocate of a New Turn, a rejection of the radical policy. Sambuu escaped demotion and punishment for his role in what came to be known as the Leftist Deviation of the 1928–1932 period. Leaders who had espoused the leftist views were dismissed from their positions or were purged or eventually, in some cases, executed. Yet Sambuu, as was characteristic of his entire career, was not criticized. He himself mounted a critical barrage against the Leftist Deviationists, whom he had earlier supported, for not educating the herders about collectives, for not studying local conditions before initiating these radical policies, and for misidentifying herders as rich and then punishing them.

How did Sambuu avoid blame for misguided policies and at the same time survive the purges that afflicted Mongolia from the late 1920s until the early 1950s? The answer remains elusive. Was he fortunate in having influential patrons? Was he a clever bureaucratic infighter? The evidence does not support such a view of his abilities. More likely, he had an ingratiating personality and was unpretentious, and wielders of power did not perceive of him as a threat. Throughout his career, he would willingly accept positions out of the limelight, ceding final authority to such leaders and heads of state and the MPRP as Kh. Choibalsan (1895–1952) and Yu. Tsedenbal (1916–1991), with both of whom he enjoyed cordial relations and whom he repeatedly praised. In his autobiography, he mentioned, but in a low-key manner, the various medals he received for his work. His encomiums to the Soviet Union and in particular Joseph Stalin for its assistance in fostering education, including the establishment of the first university in Mongolia in 1942, and modern medicine and in promoting herding and industry certainly helped protect him. His adopted son told us that he was an avid chess player and laconic, a trait and a skill indi-

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19. Bawden, *The Modern History of Mongolia*, 305.

cating cautiousness and an asset in surviving difficult times.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, serving as an ambassador for almost ten years, he was not in Mongolia during the height of the purges.

However tough and ruthless he might have been to reach the highest pinnacles of power, his actions revealed a generous spirit that earned him considerable respect. When his own blood daughter died in 1947, he and his wife adopted her orphaned twin grandchildren and reared them as their own children. This blood adoption paved the way for four other official adoptions and supervision of twenty-two other children, one of whom was from a younger sister's family, but the others were not directly related. These children eventually had careers as writers, politicians, attorneys, and journalists. One became the most important female writer in twentieth-century Mongolia, another was elected to the Khural, and still others became physicians. His grandson, an attorney, heads the Sambuu Foundation, which currently assists herders. When he and his family returned to Mongolia after his tours as an ambassador, they lived in the Ikh Tenger, a gated, protected, and relatively luxurious area about a twenty-minute drive from central Ulaan Baatar (or "Red Hero"), the designation for Urga since 1924. His growing family led a comfortable life in the Ikh Tenger until Sambuu's death in 1972. After a life of privation as a herdsman, then as a lowly government official and a more influential government minister, and finally as an ambassador in war-torn countries, he settled in his sixties to a more placid lifestyle.<sup>21</sup>

Before his admittance into the top ranks of the hierarchy, in the mid-1930s, he became minister of animal husbandry and crop farming. He was an inspired choice for the position, which was particularly important after the failure and abandonment of the collectivization movement. As a former herdsman with considerable experience in that demanding occupation, Sambuu could reassure the herders, who had, because of collectivization and the ensuing turbulence, lost confidence in the government. They had witnessed a sharp decline in the animal census from about 23 million to approximately 16 million or 17 million.<sup>22</sup> Sambuu set about assisting the herders and regaining their trust. In his autobiography, he repeatedly expressed gratitude to the Soviet Union for its help during his years as minister. To be sure, the Soviet Union offered graduate education for the

20. In his autobiography, Jargalsaikhan, one of his underlings at the Mongolian embassy in the Soviet Union, also noted that Sambuu "was good at all sorts of games," including chess and volleyball, and loved to fish and to hunt for wolves. Jargalsaikhan found him to be "an extremely sincere head of the Party and State . . . not infected with corruption" and summarized by writing that Sambuu "was a simple, sober, lively, nice and humorous man with a strong intelligence," assets that served him well. See Mary Rossabi, trans., B. Jargalsaikhan, *Reminiscences of Many Years: Records of an Ambassador* (forthcoming).

21. Interview with S. Surenjav, Ulaan Baatar, April 24, 2009.

22. Rupen, *Mongols of the Twentieth Century*, 232. On page 233, Rupen noted "an offhand remark by Stalin that the MPR should support 200 million head (!) by 1951–1953."

veterinarians, whom the herders sorely needed. However, Sambuu's Ministry also assisted by constructing wells, transporting animals and animal products to market, supplying hay in winter, providing information, and other guides for the demanding tasks entailed in an environment of occasional frigid winters and drought-laden summers.

The culmination of Sambuu's efforts was publication of his guidebook *Malchidad Okh Zovlogoo* (Advice to Herders) in 1945. Before the communist revolution, monasteries and the local princely governments owned most of the animals and had experts who could offer advice to novice herders. After the revolution, herders were on their own, and quite a few lacked the experience, knowledge, and guidance to succeed in the pastoral life. In the mid-nineteenth century, To-wang, grandson of one of the four most important Khans, had written instructions for herders that emphasized "alternatives to herding." To-wang, who knew Manchu, Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian, made "agriculture . . . compulsory for many people . . . set up his own water mills . . . brought back skilled workmen to instruct his people . . . set up handicraft shops for producing textiles . . . mined gold, and had salt and soda gathered . . . [and] encouraged fishing and hunting."<sup>23</sup> However, by the 1930s, the book he had written was not readily available, nor was it up to date.

Recognizing the need for a new and more sophisticated work on herding, Sambuu, according to his grandson, gathered together experts and culled information and best practices from them. The resulting book was thus a compendium rather than merely his advice. Nonetheless, he produced the work, and it has been praised as "a wonderful book, written in the most difficult style of all, requiring a real master: the everyday language of the people, but used with literary distinction, at once firm and delicate."<sup>24</sup> It combined traditional lore with modern scientific methods and was reprinted in 1999 and 2000, a difficult time for many herders.

His tenure as minister coincided with a recovery in the herding economy. The number of animals increased from the paltry 16 million to 17 million in 1932 to 25 million in 1938.<sup>25</sup> Although Choibalsan, the principal leader, urged party officials to work toward a census of 50 million, a totally unrealistic figure that the pasturelands could not have sustained, the approximately 50 percent growth during Sambuu's years as minister was remarkable. His support for herders and their trust in him and the Ministry contributed to this sharp increase in production.

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23. Bawden, *The Modern History of Mongolia*, 180.

24. Owen Lattimore, *Nomads and Commissars: Mongolia Revisited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), 45.

25. Rupen, *Mongols of the Twentieth Century*, 233.

## SAMBUU AS AN AMBASSADOR

In 1937, his success at the Ministry apparently led to his totally unexpected appointment as ambassador to the Soviet Union. He had never been outside the country, yet he now had Mongolia's most important diplomatic position. While it is true that few Mongolians had spent time abroad, still some in the elite had traveled to China, Germany, or Russia and could have served as ambassadors. This puzzling choice can be explained only as recognition of Sambuu's ability to get along with different types of people and his skill in not alienating or making enemies with influential leaders. He also was not identified with a specific program or policy that could be repudiated. Government leaders could rely on him to abide by their policies, and the supreme leader Choibalsan's instructions indicate that Sambuu was under some restraints. Choibalsan told the new ambassador that he needed to seek permission from the government even to meet with foreigners except for citizens from the Soviet Union and Tuva. He also ought to report any information that he could gather about the Japanese "imperialists" and their intentions. Finally, Choibalsan urged him to keep close tabs on the increasing number of Mongolian students in the Soviet Union.

On November 3, 1937, Sambuu departed from the only country he had ever lived in to undertake his new responsibilities in Moscow. He left Mongolia at the height of the major purges afflicting the communist era. The government killed or executed thousands of lamas, Buryat intellectuals, military men, members of the old aristocracy, prominent MPR officials, and ordinary individuals, portraying them as Japanese spies or counter-revolutionaries.<sup>26</sup> P. Genden and A. Amar (1886–1939?, 1941?), two former prime ministers, were executed in the Soviet Union. Soldiers and party activists confiscated Buddhist property and assets and destroyed or damaged monasteries and their artistic and literary treasures, a substantial loss to Mongolia's cultural history. In his autobiography, Sambuu hardly mentioned the disruptions and chaos of these terror-filled years, which engulfed some of his friends and associates, including his longtime patron and associate Genden. He omitted perhaps the most striking developments in Mongolia in the late 1930s. Reports about the violence must have reached him in Moscow, but he focused instead on his duties and ignored the disturbances in his homeland and in the Soviet Union. He had a fine pretext for doing so—his vital tasks in the Soviet Union.

Even before his arrival, a Soviet-Mongolian Agreement in 1929 and a Soviet Mongolian Protocol in 1936 had bound Mongolia closer to the Soviet

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26. B. Dashpurev and S. K. Soni, *Reign of Terror in Mongolia, 1920–1990* (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1992), and Shagdarin Sandag, *Poisoned Arrows: The Stalin-Choibalsan Mongolian Massacres* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), offer useful if perhaps exaggerated and somewhat unreliable accounts of these purges. A careful and unbiased study is required.

Union. Genden opposed such a political alliance, a stance that may have contributed to his execution.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps the most significant provisions of the protocol were that "the USSR was to render assistance in strengthening Mongolia's military forces," and "in case of necessity, the Mongolian government was to provide the USSR favorable conditions for moving Soviet Army troops through the territory of Mongolia."<sup>28</sup> Both the Soviet Union and Mongolia feared Japanese incursions from Manchukuo into Mongolia, and it is no accident that Choibalsan instructed Sambuu to keep watch over Japan. Sambuu was gratified, in 1939, when Mongolian and Soviet troops defeated the Japanese in a battle at the Khalkh River (or Nomonhan to the Japanese) along the Mongolia–Manchukuo border. Japanese expansionism was halted, leading to a Soviet-Japanese Non-Aggression Pact in April of 1941 "when Tokyo agreed . . . to a Joint Declaration recognizing the territorial integrity and inviolability of the MPR, in exchange for Moscow's recognition of Japan's puppet state of Manchukuo."<sup>29</sup> Sambuu expressed considerable relief at this resolution of the Japanese threat.

He remained as ambassador in the Soviet Union until 1946, a crucial era in the twentieth century. The staff he developed would include some of the most important diplomats in the postwar period. For example, his deputy B. Jargalsaikhan (1915–2006) would later assume the position of minister of foreign affairs and later still would become the first Mongolian ambassador to the United Nations. The entire staff needed to abide by the policy subsumed under the slogan of the Soviet Union as the elder brother and Mongolia as the younger brother, assuring the Soviet Union of an influential role in Mongolian domestic and foreign policies.

Nonetheless, Sambuu had his own agendas for his tenure as ambassador. One task was to facilitate the actual mechanics of Soviet–Mongolian commerce. The lack of infrastructure hampered the transport of Soviet products to Mongolia. Sambuu told Soviet officials that Mongolia required expertise to develop plans to improve roads and railroads to facilitate the flow of goods to his country. After World War II, such transport projects would be initiated. Sambuu cooperated with Anastas Mikoyan (1895–1978), the Soviet minister of trade, who emphasized the Soviet Union's desire for Mongolian dairy and meat products. Mikoyan, a specialist on food supplies and the economy, made the practical suggestion to Sambuu to construct meat processing plants closer to the animals in the countryside rather than in Ulaan Baatar. It is difficult to tell whether Sambuu transmitted this advice to his superiors in Mongolia.

27. Elena Boikove, "Aspects of Soviet-Mongolia Relations," in *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*, ed. Stephen Kotkin and Bruce Elleman (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 112–13.

28. Boikove, "Aspects of Soviet-Mongolia Relations," 115.

29. Bruce Elleman, "The Final Consolidation of the USSR's Sphere of Interest in Outer Mongolia" in Kotkin and Elleman, *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century*, 128.

Sambuu's consuming passion during the early years of his tenure as ambassador was the status and progress of the Mongolian university students in the Soviet Union. He repeatedly wrote that these students constituted Mongolia's future and was convinced that Mongolian schools needed to teach Russian in order to expand the pool of Mongolians eligible to study in the Soviet Union. An educated Mongolian populace was one of his most important objectives. He had striven so mightily to become literate that he was obviously delighted to learn that, with the assistance of the Soviet Union, the National University of Mongolia, the country's first university, had been founded in October 1942. Even during the dark days of World War II, he mentioned, with great pride, the establishment of the university in Mongolia. However, his main concern was with the students who faced food shortages and lived spartan lives in the Soviet Union. He and his wife set about inviting students to dinners. Bazaryn Shirendev (1912–2001), one of these students who eventually became rector of the National University of Mongolia (1946–1953), among other important positions, expressed his gratitude in his own autobiography, writing that "J. Sambuu, who was our ambassador, was very kind to us and sometimes used to invite us for meals."<sup>30</sup>

The onset of World War II compelled Sambuu to turn his attention to war efforts. Naturally, he agreed with the communist assessment that the Nazi–Soviet pact of 1939 was a brilliant maneuver because it offered the Soviet Union time to prepare for a German invasion. Historians have disputed this assertion, claiming that the Soviet purges had devastated the Soviet army leadership and that Joseph Stalin did not make adequate preparations to counter the Nazi attack. Sambuu claimed to have been impressed with Stalin in their meetings together and often praised the Soviet leader. He wrote that Stalin spoke softly but was voluble and reputedly direct in his statements and opinions. In any event, Sambuu remained in Moscow throughout the war except for a brief period during which he and other ambassadors were evacuated when German armies approached Moscow.

Sambuu's war efforts were centered on providing supplies for the Soviet Union. He served as the official in charge of so-called gifts, which consisted of *deels*, boots, gloves, and jackets to Soviet soldiers and ordinary people.<sup>31</sup> The Soviets, via Anastas Mikoyan, craved meat and dairy products, which the Mongolians furnished. Sambuu proudly asserted that the Mongolians'

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30. Temujin Onon, trans., *Through the Ocean Waves: The Autobiography of Bazaryn Shirendev* (Bellingham: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University, 1997), 103. On page 13, Shirendev wrote that he was born in 1912. Alan Sanders, *Historical Dictionary of Mongolia*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 298, wrote that he was born in 1911.

31. A delegation led by Choibalsan, the Mongolian leader, brought about 740 wagons of food and 300 kilograms of gold as gifts to the Soviet Union in late 1942. See Alicia Campi and R. Baasan, *The Impact of China and Russia on United States–Mongolian Political Relations in the Twentieth Century* (Lewiston, ME: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), 275.

dispatch of horses helped the Soviet cavalry in its campaigns. Under Mikoyan's leadership, the Soviet Union reciprocated by providing guns, bullets, and other military equipment to Mongolia. In turn, Sambuu, in his autobiography, attributed the victory over the Nazis to the Soviet Union and condemned the West for not opening a second front until June 1944. Here too he echoed the Soviet line. He also credited Soviet troops with liberating Eastern Europe and Denmark.

Once the Germans had surrendered in 1945, the Allies turned their attention to Asia, including Mongolia. Even earlier at the Yalta Conference of February 1945, Stalin had elicited a pledge from U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt to accept Mongolia's status as an independent country free of Chinese control. During the next few months, Stalin pressured Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese government to accept Mongolian independence, which no Chinese government from 1921 on had approved.<sup>32</sup> He also "repeatedly used [the threat of occupying] Inner Mongolia to induce the Chinese concession on Outer Mongolia."<sup>33</sup> In a weak position because of his tenuous hold on China and his fears that the Soviet Union would assist the Chinese communists, Chiang proposed a policy of considerable autonomy but Chinese suzerainty over Mongolia. Stalin rejected this compromise, and Chiang then returned with a face-saving offer of independence if a plebiscite in Mongolia chose that path. However, he proposed that Inner Mongolia would remain under Chinese control. Stalin knew about Chiang's acquiescence to MPR independence and at a meeting in July 1945 with Choibalsan and Sambuu told them about the new Chinese position.<sup>34</sup> The plebiscite, held in October, reputedly found not a single Mongolian in favor of Chinese suzerainty. In January 1946, the Chinese government recognized the fait accompli and temporarily accepted Mongolian independence.

With that recognition, Sambuu's tasks in the Soviet Union came to an end. In 1945, he had published his *Advice to Herders*, in Mongolian and Russian, which had earned him a reputation in his homeland. The political leadership, believing that he had had a distinguished career in the Soviet Union, appointed him deputy minister of foreign affairs, a position he filled from 1946 to 1950. His autobiography generally omitted mention of this period, except for a brief discussion of his role in demarcating the boundary between China and Mongolia. He focused instead on his subse-

32. See Morris Rossabi, "Sino-Mongolian Relations, 1990–2000," paper presented at Columbia University Faculty Seminar on Modern China, October 2000, and Morris Rossabi, "A New Mongolia in a New World," in *Mongolian Political and Economic Development during the Past Ten Years and Future Prospects* (Taipei: Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission, 2000), 64–67.

33. Liu Xiaoyuan, *Reins of Liberation: An Entangled History of Mongolian Independence, Chinese Territoriality, and Great Power Hegemony, 1911–1950* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 345.

34. Christopher Atwood, "Sino-Soviet Diplomacy and the Second Partition of Mongolia, 1945–1946," in Kotkin and Elleman, *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century*, 142.

quent appointment to the vital post of ambassador to North Korea in 1950. War had erupted between North and South Korea right at the time of his arrival in Pyongyang. His reports on Korea in his autobiography related to the suffering of the Koreans. He helped initiate drives for clothing, food, and supplies in Mongolia for the North Koreans and facilitated the adoption of about two hundred children orphaned by the war (though many of the children were returned to North Korea at the conclusion of the war), still another example of his emphasis on young people wherever he went. Blaming the United States for interference in Korea's internal affairs, he castigated the United States as the aggressor and portrayed the so-called Great Leader of North Korea Kim Il-Song (1912–1984) in a positive light.<sup>35</sup> Having arrived as North Korea faced a crisis and was losing the war, he departed in either late 1951 or early 1952, as China's dispatch of troops had created a stalemate on the Korean peninsula.

## SAMBUU IN MONGOLIA

Sambuu returned to Mongolia to assume his previous position of deputy minister of foreign affairs, and he concluded his autobiography at this point. Two years later, he became a member of the Politburo and chairman of the Presidium of the Great Khural, but he provided no details about his later career. Choibalsan died in 1952, and some in Mongolia believe that Sambuu was chosen as chairman as a moderating voice between the older and more hard-line and the younger and more liberal generations, but he remained silent about his new appointment. He also did not mention his generally anti-Buddhist work *Shashin ba Lam Naryn Asundald* (*On the Question of Religion and the Lamas*), which he published in 1961.<sup>36</sup> He retained his chairmanship of the Presidium until his death in 1972 but did not describe his activities in that post. In any event, the position was, at that time, largely ceremonial. Leaders of the MPRP were the true wielders of power.

Instead of a recounting of the last decades of his life and career, Sambuu ended his autobiography with a series of almost naive nostrums, directed mostly at the younger generation. Concern with children had been a recur-

35. Mongolia continues to have tolerable relations with North Korea. See Migeddorj Batchimeg, "Mongolia's DPRK: Engaging North Korea," *Asian Survey* 46, no. 2 (March–April 2006): 275–97. In August 2008, to commemorate the sixtieth year anniversary of the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), a "Friendship Center" was established in Ulaan Baatar, with the works of Kim Il-Song and Kim Il-Jong prominently displayed, and Sambuu's grandson S. Surenjav, representing the Sambuu Herders' Development Fund of Mongolia, gave the keynote speech. See KCNA, Pyongyang "Mongolia-DPRK Friendship Centre Opened," September 6, 2008, <http://www.kcna.co.jp/item/2008/200809>, September 9, 2008 (accessed February 17, 2009).

36. On this work, see Owen Lattimore, "Religion and Revolution in Mongolia," *Modern Asian Studies* 1 (1967): 81–94.

ring theme throughout his life, and the concluding remarks of his autobiography would prove to be no exception. He started by noting that "there were many demands from our Party and government to provide the best educated and prepared people. So from a young age, attention was paid to each child in terms of the State's revenues for lower, middle, and advanced educations." In turn, each student and professional "should refresh both his theoretical and practical knowledge that is related to his profession by reading books and publications and using his mind." He did not ignore herding, which he described as "the fundamental branch of the economy," and he praised herders, who made their own clothing and furnishings, for engaging "in creative work which went beyond animal husbandry." Repeatedly lauding "our Dear Party" [the MPRP] and the government, he concluded with a plea for people to be polite to others and to respect public property.

One insider's book that included an account of Sambuu's last years yielded insights into his character and ability to survive. After Choibalsan's death, Yu. Tsedenbal assumed the position of prime minister, becoming the most powerful figure in government. His Russian wife Anastasia Ivanovna Filatova, whom many Mongolians believed to be the really powerful member of the couple, had created enemies through her high-handedness and imperiousness. According to the insider's account, Sambuu was the "only person to tell the truth to Tsedenbal and his wife Filatova."<sup>37</sup> Sambuu had the diplomatic skills, the gravitas, and the respect to respond or, on occasion, to dress down this difficult spouse of the preeminent Mongolian leader from 1952 to 1984.

Events after his death revealed the respect Sambuu engendered. D. Sükhbaatar (1893–1923) and Kh. Choibalsan, two heads of state, were buried in a monument in front of the Khural building, or Government House, in Sükhbaatar Square. Sambuu, not the head of state, was the only other leader buried in Sükhbaatar Square, north of Government House, a remarkable indication of Sambuu's popularity. In 2006, as part of a commemoration of the eight-hundredth anniversary of Chinggis Khan's unification of the Mongolian people, a huge sculptural panel, with images of Chinggis, his son and successor Ögödei, and his grandson Khubilai, replaced the monument and tomb in Sükhbaatar Square. Sambuu's remains were transferred to the Altan Olgii cemetery on the capital's outskirts.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps to placate his family and his supporters, government officials then sanctioned the

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37. Sh. G. Nadirov, *Tsedenbal and the Events of August, 1984*, trans. Baasan Ragchaa (Bloomington, IN: Mongolia Society Occasional Paper 25, 2005), 55.

38. See *Olloo: Mongol News and Information Portal Web Site*, <http://www.olloo.mn/en/modules.php?name=News7&file=article7&sid=547&catid=32>, December 4, 2006 (accessed January 15, 2009).

construction of a bronze sculpture next to the National History Museum.<sup>39</sup> They also named the street in front of the museum in his honor.

In sum, Sambuu represented an authoritarian government and ought to be held accountable for its brutality and its suppressions. However, he himself never took part in specific cases of repression. He criticized men who had been purged, particularly in the early days of the communist revolution—men who had been shot or otherwise executed based on the flimsiest evidence. He surely approved of the campaigns against monasteries and lamas, groups he had despised since childhood. Yet he does not appear, at least based on the available evidence, to have been as ruthless and bloodthirsty as some in the communist hierarchy. As a diplomat for part of his career, a total of about a decade, he was more prone to seek compromises rather than to crush opponents. Throughout his life, he seems to have garnered more respect from and to have been perceived more favorably by Mongolians than most contemporaneous political figures who pursued more belligerent and ruthless policies.

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39. An image of this sculpture, produced by Amgalan Tsevegmid, may be found at [http://www.amgalanart.com/mo2007\\_jsambuu.php](http://www.amgalanart.com/mo2007_jsambuu.php) (accessed March 15, 2009).



*PATHS OF LIFE*

A Translation by Mary Rossabi



# Preface

In our patriotic environment, our clever youth, with its talent for work, has the courage, strength, and ability to gloriously build a good and bright future. It is my wish and aim that these thoughts will be useful and that a small part of the humble recollections of what I have experienced in life is briefly presented here.



# 1

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## My Ignorant Simple Childhood

Following the old calendar, in the 20th year of Emperor Guangxu's reign,<sup>1</sup> in the female blue sheep year or on June 27, 1895, I was born to Lodong Jamsrang, a serf of the deputy *taij*<sup>2</sup> Chimeddavaa, of the Gobi Tüshee Gun banner of the Tüsheet Khan *aimag*.<sup>3</sup> I was born in a place known as the terrace of the Three Ravines of Resolute Prince Tserenbavai's banner. This place is now the southern part of Töv *aimag*'s Büren *sum*; to the northwest is "Sable Ridge." My beloved father, Jamsrang, and my mother, Baljin, in whose cherished care I lacked for nothing, worked hard to raise me with loving warmth, kindness, and good health, which I can't help thinking about and remarking on.

At this time, Mongolian workers were dominated by their Manchu colonizers, and many clerical and secular feudal lords and their property were seized and exploited. Thus they were impoverished and suffered in their sorrow and misery. Another aspect of all this was the cruel and corrupt Yellow [Buddhist] religion, which through empty doctrines tried to deceive people and exploit their property, sucking it out by false methods and empty ideas.

In such difficult circumstances, I was raised under the loving protection of my father and mother and when I was six years old I was able to help herding the lambs and kids, cleaning the *khashaa*,<sup>4</sup> preparing fresh and dry places for the animals to lie down, and during the warm weather, gathering dung. In these times, goods were very rare, and during the spring and summer we wore shorts and shirts but in the hot weather, we went practically

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1. The Guangxu Emperor reigned in China from 1875 to 1908.

2. A title for the nobility in pre-communist Mongolia.

3. Province.

4. Fenced-in enclosure for animals.

naked. When the weather turned cold, we wore old worn-out sheepskin *deels*<sup>5</sup> but barely had boots. Sometimes we wore yellow felt over the sheepskin *deels* so they wouldn't catch fire.

People in our country were accustomed to economizing on eating meat so they ate meat the first month in winter until the middle of the last month of spring. In the intervening periods, they ate white food [i.e., milk products]. In the winter and spring seasons, the children ate the shank, tongue, throats, and chins of the lambs and goats, which made the best food. Primarily in winter time, blood was drained from the cattle's stomachs, livers, and lungs and was mixed to make a kind of black pudding of blood and offal encased in animal intestines and then frozen. The blood of horses or cows was used mainly for this pudding to which one could take a dislike. Now and again flour was added to it which, I thought, made it much better. For many people, flour and rice were very rare—in fact, flour was not regularly available. Strong, yellow husks of rice were used a little. Generally, meat was scarce, so milk, milk products, *airagh*<sup>6</sup>, and yogurt had been necessities for a long time, and this tradition persists.

When children suddenly caught cold or had a high fever, it was necessary to prepare an extract of boiled juniper. When people had upset stomachs or food poisoning, snow ice or well water was boiled many times and mixed with sugar to help in recovery. Wounds had to be treated with the root of rhubarb, and the body had to be treated with roasted roots mixed with sugar also to aid in recovery. At that time, scientific treatment was not available, so it was necessary to follow these methods.

As the days and months passed, I was learning to be helpful. In summer and fall I helped with the young livestock, and when I was seven and eight, I shepherded the sheep away from home. In winter and spring, I was responsible for keeping away the wolves with shepherd dogs, and I also collected dung for fuel. In summer, I helped my mother, in shifts, milking the goats and the sheep. While milking the goats, I learned to milk the sheep. When I became a skilled milker, people would ask my mother if I was a girl. I was embarrassed because people thought I was a girl, but I still obeyed my mother and continued to work to improve my skills and win the approval of my neighbors. In so doing, I was considered a good kid with potential, which the old people attributed to my parents. They went on to say that I should be taught as much as possible at an early age.

It was common at this time that if young people or children did something socially unacceptable or acted immorally, their elders would criticize them and teach them ethics regardless of whether they were in the same family. In this way, the young were educated and learned to respect their elders.

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5. A long robe, made of fur-lined sheepskin, with a sash.

6. Fermented mare's milk.

When I was eight years old, my father and mother wanted me to learn the Mongolian script and asked the local scribe/clerk Dügersüren to take me on as a pupil to learn the alphabet and the Mongolian script. In his free time, this old teacher taught me the sequence of letters of the Mongolian alphabet. After several weeks, I had learned several sequences of letters in the Mongolian alphabet, and he taught me words with two, then three letters. I was given examples of verbs and could spell out almost a full sentence. With great encouragement, I tried to read books written in the Mongolian script, and I sometimes could also write a little with charcoal on an ash board. Under guidance from my elderly teacher and with practice, my hand was getting better in following the style. When the old teacher was ill, people in his family were anxious about this kind man and sought salvation from Lochin Lovon, a highly respected lama who was believed to have tremendous power. They entrusted his life to the lama to help rid him of his illness through exorcism and religious ceremonies. Fifteen animals were offered, but none of this helped, and my teacher became even feebler and died.

So this good teacher departed the suffering of his body but not before giving me a good omen and souvenir for learning—a reed writing brush, whetstone, and ink container. This gift increased my interest in learning and was a good souvenir of my relationship with my teacher.

Although there was no more instruction from my teacher who had already taught me Mongolian writing, each day when I had free time, I continued to learn and paint the letters as they were joined. In our area, there were no people who knew how to write the Mongolian script, but there were a lot of people who used many Tibetan prayers. However, only a few people knew the Tibetan language and were acquainted with the Mother Goddess Tara, the lamaist prayer to Manjusri, or Tsongkhapa.<sup>7</sup> Thus they believed in the fantastic and meditated in an empty fashion, increasing their religious services to get rid of all the sorrows and disasters of their lives, entrusting themselves to Buddha with prayer so that the crafty lamas made quite a profit.

Without a teacher to guide and instruct me, it was very difficult to learn the Mongolian script according to the rules. I tried to read new books like "Key to Knowledge" of "The Story of the White Birds" which had to be read letter by letter and offered me only a cursory sense of the meaning. One didn't know whether one was reading correctly or not, and one couldn't believe in oneself because there was no encouragement. As the years passed, and I reached the age of twelve, I was so eager to learn to read and write in Mongolian that I didn't become discouraged.

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7. Manjusri is the Bodhisattva [a figure who reaches nirvana but comes to Earth to help others do so] of Wisdom; Tsongkhapa (1357–1419) was the founder of the Yellow Hat sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

In order to learn about what the sheep and goats ate when I looked after them, I talked with my father. I also asked about all sorts of work and learned the richest areas for the sheep to find couch grass, feathergrass, wormwood, bird feet, and wild leek that were all mixed in with other thin grasses. The goats climbed to those areas on the mountain crests and stone cliffs, where the best edible plants and legumes predominated, to eat the green tips of these legumes and the grains that were forming into ears. And so I had clear memories that a herd of sheep with many goats was very difficult to herd. My mother and father grew concerned about my running after the sheep, so they taught me to ride our black and white horse, an activity which I am still fond of today. I quickly learned to mount and dismount, and I was pleased when my parents told me that the horse could be mine for sheep herding and for looking after the camels in the far pastures.

My father continued to teach me how to drive and pasture the camels. He gave me instructions for finding suitable pastures from the last month of spring to the last month of summer and how to pasture the animals when there wasn't sufficient water and salt. He also helped me know when the wind was changeable on the hillocks and when it was the appropriate time to drive the livestock who were always restless in the wind.

The camels needed to be pastured in hollows, on the steppe, or in the valleys with bushes in low places with an abundance of wild leek, Mongolian onion, couch grass, and feathergrass where it was cool and fresh and where there was plenty of salt. For the camel herds to fatten up, they needed to graze near standing salty water, which helps the short wool of the second shearing to grow. Since one learned more each day, the work of herding and caring for the livestock became easier. At this time, sheep and camel wool, and especially goat wool, received little attention and so much was wasted. Thus one day my father told me that if I collected the wool from our sheep, he would buy me writing equipment, candies, and a cake from Nomkhon, a trader. Nomkhon stocked it for a Chinese peddler named Bayandalai who came to our *ger*,<sup>8</sup> having made trading arrangements with father. Incidentally, I traded sheep and camel wool for writing equipment and, for the most valuable item, black ink. Bayandalai said that this wool was of poor quality and after much bargaining we received in exchange only ten pieces of a poor quality paper and a pot of black ink.

Father didn't refuse this, believing it was all right since these items were necessary, and later we would negotiate with Bayandalai to trade in the wool. We were sure that there would be trade in animal skins with our Chinese trading partner and that we could obtain really easy credit for the goods. Father said that Bayandalai was a real smooth talker and that we would know his true nature after doing more business with him.

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8. A Mongolian-style tent.

I now had paper, ink, and a writing brush to write out my letters and with this equipment I was happy. When my late teacher was alive, he had given me two brushes as a present, and I soaked one in water for the first time to use on the letters of the Mongolian alphabet. My writing was too tight, and I couldn't control the ink very well so I covered the paper poorly and when I tried to erase, I made a mess. With the spare time I had from work, I indefatigably, again and again, tried keenly for several months to dip the tip of the brush in the ink and let my hand become accustomed to the most likely shapes of the letters. With limited manual dexterity, I wrote the Mongolian characters—all unalike—on an ash board with a bamboo pen, a brush, ink, and the required grooved paper. Writing the letters so that they joined was on my mind day and night, so I seized any opportunity to write. I kept copying the "Key to Knowledge." From time to time, I wasn't embarrassed to show what I had written to people who knew and understood the Mongolian script. These people told my parents that I was doing well and that they should give me more opportunity to practice.

As a result, I demanded more time to practice from my mother and father and was happy when they gave me time to practice reading and writing each day during the gaps in our work. However, there was no teacher to guide me in the rules of grammar, which I couldn't learn by myself. But I did not become discouraged and continued to read my books and to copy some interesting parts from them and in that way I combined learning and herding until I reached the age of thirteen.

## 2

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# Becoming Acquainted with the Hardships of Life

One spring day, the assistant to our ruling *taij* Chimeddavaa, sent a message to my father, suddenly summoning him. Among other things, that document said, "Jamsran, you are to send your thirteen year old son with all his summer and winter clothes to us immediately; I will teach him to write." The decree also said it was to be known in advance that no reasons for declining were allowed. As soon as the order was received, my parents were pleased that the lord was gracious enough to care about their son and that I would have the opportunity to learn. Thus they prepared my summer and winter clothing which included my winter *deel*, other garments, a Chinese brush, and the remains of the ink, all of which I put in my black saddlebag. Then together with father I rode my black and white horse, and when I was leaving my mother prayed to the national emblem and gave milk to the gods and the sky to receive good omens for my education. Father and I trotted almost all day long and covered the two postal relay stations to get to Bor Tugrug where the banner Prince Chimeddavaa lived. Father and I arrived just before sunset, thirsty and tired.

This family's settlement included, on its western edge, a big white *ger* with light blue cotton cloth trim and two smaller gray houses on the northwestern edge where we tied up our horses. In the morning as we both walked toward the big white *ger*, part of a community of twenty, a brown woman who was wearing a patched gray *deel* and seemed to be a servant met us. She was holding back the dogs. Both father and I were overawed when we entered the *ger*. On the left side of the banner prince's residence, a robust dark man dressed in a brown silk *deel*, typical of the southern part of the country, sat on a cushion, which rested on a multi-colored spotted

rug. He made a face at us, and his wife, seated by his side, with her rouged cheeks and stiffly arranged hair full of ornaments, was disdainful.

My father knelt before these two and bowed backwards, and prayed for their peace and well-being. The *taij* asked: "So, you brought your son" and father answered: "Yes, because I wish him to learn." The Princess said: "How old is he and what can he do so far?" My father was quite hesitant but answered: "This spoiled child can only take care of lambs and calves." She answered that such a big child could certainly care for the sheep. The Princess brusquely told the woman servant to fetch tea for both of us, and continued, contemptuously, that she should not put the saddle bag full of clothes and *deels* into their *ger*, but into the smaller, subsidiary *ger*. I could tell from my father's expression that he was upset leaving me with this inconsiderate Prince and Princess and was afraid that instead of becoming educated I would turn into a servant of the banner Prince. However, one had to know when one had to overcome this submission to authority. My poor father was worried by this thought, but as the evening approached, he had to leave and embraced me and went off with a strange and sorrowful look on his face.

I spent the next few weeks hoping the lord would teach me writing and in the meantime I was sent to work for Dontor, nicknamed "Black Eye," whose specialty was care of the sheep and who fell ill at that time. Every day without a break I had the burden of taking care of the sheep, and though I went through the mill I began to learn the hardships of life. One day, the lord (or "the teacher") said: "If you tend the sheep well, I will teach you Mongolian writing once a week." I realized that I had no rights and endured my situation as a servant. By this time, Dontor had recovered, and we took turns minding the sheep, collecting dung, and beating the wool to make felt, so that there was no time to rest.

"The teacher" or Prince gave orders for me to write letters while the Lady or Princess Dashdavaa ordered me to stop walking around with my papers, pointing out that there was work to be done. She always found fault and was heartless, with no time for pity. As the popular saying goes, "The Queen is worse than the King." She didn't just humiliate and shout at me, but treated the young women, the shepherds, and the horse and camel herd-ers in the same way and ceaselessly nagged all of us. The Princess bullied people so that when they were together, they whispered that "just as a goat's head isn't used in a ceremony, a greedy, stingy lady can't be a good judge."

In the warm summer, it was difficult to herd "the teacher's" sheep in the stony desert pastures of the steppe because many of the flocks went to distant areas, and I had to run after them, barefoot, while at the same time trying to please the Princess. Running barefoot long distances over the black earth at first cracked the bottom of my feet and made them sore, but in due course they became hardened and tough. "Learn toughness, not

rights" I had heard my mother say from time to time, and now I knew what she meant.

I learned that on cloudy, cool days, the sheep grazed in the meadows and along the ravines propped up against the southern slopes, and on warm and sunny days pastures and hillocks offered good feeding areas. On the cold and rainy days, since I did not have a raincoat I had to reverse my sheepskin *deel* so that the wool was on the outside. The grass, which was very wet and kept stinging and entwining itself around my feet, coupled with my *deel*, which became very heavy in the rain, made keeping the sheep and goats together difficult.

In summer, midday was the time to milk the sheep. It was a commonly followed tradition so if I was late "the teacher's" Princess said that I was stupid to follow the sheep like a dog. So I started to put my whip into the ground to guess the time, and I knew it was midday when it cast a shadow straight to the north. I could also guess the time of day by observing how my own shadow was cast to the north.

The shepherd Dontor taught me that the sheep paused to rest while at midday, and then were moved to the pastures where they continued to eat greedily. Thus it was best to move the herds from morning pastures where there was untrodden, green grass and the sheep, which were producing milk, could grow fat and produce even more milk. While looking after "the teacher's" sheep in the last month of summer, I asked the servant woman to make a new *deel* for me out of the rags and tatters of my old clothes, and whenever I wore this I thought of my home and my parents. Day and night I dreamed that I climbed up a high ridge and could see my home territory and that one day I would be able to return there. Shortly thereafter, Dontor informed me that the lord had been called to serve at the banner office for two months, and thus I hoped that I could soon return home for a while.<sup>1</sup> But "the teacher" told his wife, Princess Dashdavaa, that now it was fall it was time to fatten all the cattle so every day from then on the animals were to be taken to the rich far distant pastures where there was plenty of grass, water, and salt. Thus "the teacher" told the horse herder, Bold, to keep an eye on the herding when the lord departed for his work at the banner office. Dontor warned me about Bold, the horse herder, who was a relative of "the teacher" and might flatter me to my face but slander me and my herding abilities to the Princess who would curse at me.

"The teacher" packed his saddle bags and left the next day to fulfill his feudal obligation at the banner office but not before giving those who worked for him heavy assignments. Then he departed, using the relay service. Without "the teacher," his wife, the Princess, instructed us, and her scolding and shouts became harsher and more violent. Before sunrise,

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1. A Banner was the administrative unit the Qing dynasty (1644–1911) of China imposed on the Mongolians.

old man Dontor and I went out regularly to the remote pastures with the sheep and before noon watered them at the deep well called Tugrug and then returned with them to the far pastures. As the sun dipped past noon, the sheep lay down on the steppe and rested, and again when the evening sun began to sink, the animals were brought back home to be penned for the night.

So the struggle continued. We were tired and always thirsty from mid-day on because without respite, the sheep scattered themselves all over the pastures, exhausting us. That wretch Bold looked on as we tried to watch the sheep in all their faraway locations. Bold made our lives miserable by reporting to the Princess every day, though he was never close to us and could only judge from a distance the amount of salt and water we made available to the animals. He pretended, however, to be involved but really just made up stories about Dontor and me and told the Princess what she wanted to hear. She believed what Bold told her and never bothered to find out the truth, turning against Dontor and me and criticizing us for not looking after the sheep in the far pastures where they could not be checked. She made clear that it was Dontor's responsibility if the sheep did not gain weight. Then this lady got angry and began to bully us while at the same time giving us nothing to eat and drink, and the ashes and dirt were thrown at me more and more.

Now I'll tell you what the elder Dontor said: "The one who flatters all the time isn't believed, and the one who bites all the time loses." No matter how much Bold flatters, if we are truthful, we will have the support of all the people. On a day when Bold kept quiet, the Princess would not give us any trouble and, in fact, would even offer us *airagh* and yoghurt. But, if he complained about our shepherding, we were reproached and scolded by the Princess who claimed that "we ate like wild horses but moved forward like rocks." The people said that the lady was a rigid and difficult person who forced people to work hard and never gave them enough food to eat. Thus the saying "when a person is excessively greedy, he or she becomes a witch" was created for people like her. When people were near the Princess, they did not speak directly or call her by name but rather bowed and hurried to do whatever she commanded them.

The days and weeks passed until the two months were over, and "the teacher" was discharged from the banner office and returned home. The sheep that I herded were so well cared for that I received a prize and was given five pieces each of papyrus and Chinese fiber paper and two writing brushes, perhaps in an attempt to support my writing. I wished to refresh my studies but as usual I worked a lot and had no spare time. Throughout the summer and fall, I continually herded sheep for the *ail*.<sup>2</sup> I was always

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2. Households or group of *gers*.

distressed thinking what I would say to my mother and father since I had learned nothing about writing, having spent all my time tending the sheep. As the last month of autumn drew to a close and hoarfrost covered the pastures, my feet froze from herding barefoot, and I frequently had a high fever and was ill. But "the teacher" was paying little attention to that, and winter was beginning. One day in winter I overheard "the teacher's" Princess saying "if we want to keep the boy with us for the winter, not only do we need to give him clothes, but we also need to feed him. Thus let's send him home for the winter and bring him back in the spring to help the sheep when they are lambing. We'll find serfs who have winter clothes to work for us." I was very glad to hear the sheep herding discussion, and I was too excited to sleep at night because I was going home.

I didn't know where Orgodol came from. He was a dark chattering fellow, over twenty years old, and was dressed in a patched sheepskin *deel*. He decided to take over the sheep herding. The horse herder Bold was told one day to take me home, and the gentlest mare was prepared for me. In my old and tattered clothes and my writing equipment, I left with Bold for my home. But he brought me to my relative Jamts's *ger* and left shortly with the black mare. I dismounted at his *ger* and had to wait impatiently for many days because I was ill with a fever and a sore throat so I could not eat and drink. I wanted to hide all of this so I could return home quickly. Fortunately, I was given a small light bay horse and was taken home covering the distance of two relay stations.

Having been sad, my father and mother were now happy and chattered away as they greeted us. They were now cheered seeing those they loved, and again and again expressed their happiness, and I felt better. But my mother and my father made me lie down quietly for a week since I was ill and healed me swiftly with food, which helped decrease the swelling and lower my temperature. There wasn't a doctor near and so the decision was to wait and see if I recovered. As I got better, my mother assembled a full set of winter clothes for me. I was happy to be fully dressed again and tried to be helpful to my mother and father. I kept comparing my life with my parents to the time I spent serving in "the teacher's" home. If I had stayed home, I never would have known the fatigue and suffering and what it was like to be someone's subordinate.

# 3

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## Loving Lessons from My Parents

The people of the Tüsleet Gun banner who knew my father praised him for being the best herder in the northern area of the banner. My father carefully selected his cattle by their color, and his few horses were all brown in color. Just from looking at the horses' coats, people knew which ones were missing. And, likewise, the cows were speckled black, and the sheep had no horns, and were pure white with black eyes and a white patch on their foreheads. The goats were of a dark color, and the camels were mainly yellow with white cheeks. He explained to me that when the black and white sheep's wool turned brownish gray, its quality declined, making it unsuitable for felt. It is difficult for the pure white sheep with a yellowish white spot on their foreheads to see in the bright sunlight or the dazzling white snow. Goats with a white, light colored coat can easily become emaciated in the cold spring winds and acquire only a scant cashmere covering, which doesn't make for warm coats. Large animals like camels of that color were useful to families lacking manpower. If they strayed, they were easily identified by asking around.

As soon as winter began, we kept the horses at the winter settlement until dusk so they could come together by themselves before dark, as the cows did. The horses ridden during the day were free to join the other horses, and there was no need to tether or hobble them at night. At dawn, I could ride a camel trained in catching these tame horses which were grazing, and I could catch one to ride for my daily work and later change to a fresh horse. Each day the horses were gathered together and settled in pastures, which were regularly watered from the well, even if there was a mantle of snow. They were provided with salt once a week. Thus, thanks to all of this, our horses were in the best condition in the area. Each day the horse herds

were pastured alongside the camels, which had to be herded separately. The herds had to be grazed separately in the pastures and at the watering holes. But there weren't many people in the household, so my father said that since we were so few people that we would have to meet the needs of the majority of our cattle. In the winter and spring seasons when good grass came through the snow in the pastures, the herds needed water every day. However, on strong windy warmer days, it wasn't necessary to saturate the herds with water. Thus my father taught me many things about the care of animals, and these lessons still stay fresh in my mind and are useful in my work.

I loved my father and cherished my mother, and each day I followed their labor instructions. In the three months of winter, there was an interval from work, letters could be learned and repeated, their shapes practiced and drawn and a few letters could even be memorized. Encouraged by my progress, I tried to record the official language people spoke but I couldn't get it right. To prevent my discouragement, mother told me to keep at it. When it was clear that the herds were pregnant, my father taught me it was time to pasture them on flat ground, or herd them to only slightly rough areas where there was water, because driving them over rough ground was punishing. It was also necessary in due course, to group together those herds which were infertile. One had to be very careful not to startle the pregnant herds while driving them up slopes and down ravines. On herding the animals, I was instructed about conditions of rearing animals, how to work to improve the young and how to prevent their loss.

In the middle of the first month of spring, I herded the sheep and camels, and my sheep and goats began to give birth. At the time of birthing, it was necessary to find a warm, dry bed of old dark droppings which had, over time, been deposited in layers to create a dry foundation for the lambs and kids. Those lambs and kids, who hadn't yet started drinking or eating in the pastures, could not be exposed to the warm sun or the cold wind. They needed to warm up when, for a few brief moments, it was warmer in the middle of the day. The lambs and kids had to be regularly cleaned of feces, and it was necessary to observe if they were getting suitable food and drink. Then the young needed to be well licked. First time mothers, especially, had to become acquainted with their newborns by smelling them and licking them so as not to reject them. They also explained how the thinner colostrum which came in after the initial colostrum helped the animal to grow. This was how my mother and father taught me as they worked tirelessly day and night with little concern for themselves.

Everyone in our family was involved with the young animals, when the order came from "the teacher" to bring me to his household immediately. My mother and father said to each other that there weren't enough people to help in their household, and I told father frankly that I didn't want to be

a servant for "the teacher" and his wife, but father replied that he had no authority to counteract this demand because it was well known that going against the "subject" Prince or "the teacher" was punishable by law.

Although my father had an audience with the Prince or "the teacher" and knelt before him to entreat him to let me stay at home, he was refused and scolded and returned home. Thus a few days after that, I was returned to "the teacher's" *gers*. There was no choice but to follow the orders of this tyrannical nobleman. Some exploit and some are exploited—that was the order of the day. This oppression was clearly connected not only to domestic situations but to foreign affairs as well. Many people talked about this suffering and oppression caused by the foreigners. Many local people said that the Manchu reign of the Guangxu Emperor collapsed in 1908 by the European calendar. Now, the Khalkha Mongols<sup>1</sup> talked of having a break from the oppressive and exploitative Manchus since the Guangxu government was followed by the Xuantong Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

But how could this administration be any better than the last? Now when I think about those times, I realize that there was grumbling against the Manchu government. The Manchu Khan had imposed setting up the horse relay services on our grandfathers and fathers and now on their children. Under the authority of the whip and cudgel, the Manchus wielded their power over the people who struggled like dogs under their feet. Innumerable relay services were established in eighty more banner offices and were paid for by the people's stock of old gelding camels, horses, and sheep. The Manchu government even expropriated some of the people's best, largest, and youngest horses, the baggage camels, and their cloth tents, which were sent overland for military needs.

On the other hand, the greedy Chinese merchants imposed a tax on property and services for many of the Mongols, and money lenders would improperly force a mother and son into debt to make people repay the debt which pushed them into poverty. To protect the Khalkha Mongols from Russian influence, commissioners forcibly organized and controlled a militia to watch the borders of Outer Mongolia beginning in the east, the west, then the far west and then the south. Thus a movement arose in many places to fight against oppression and exploitation which was causing grief. Local people said that our important officials taxed our property heavily in the name of having an annual audience with the Manchu Emperor where gifts were presented and the management of the offices in Outer Mongolia was discussed. It was, in fact, rumored they were not even permitted to have an audience with the Emperor as they knelt down, offering official tribute as soon as they passed through the Tiananmen Gate. In reality, they were

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1. The Khalkha currently constitute the largest number of Mongolians in Mongolia, amounting to more than eighty per cent of the population.

2. The Xuantong Emperor ruled China from 1908 to 1911.

only guests and had no power to participate in the internal affairs of the office that was in charge of Outer Mongolia. Under the pretext of becoming friends, marriages were set up between the influential Khalkha princes and Manchu and Chinese women. People caught in this web included our brave Prince Tserenbav, and the clever, unwavering Prince Nyant. The property of the *aimags* was seized by these lords who used it in Beijing. Not only that, the ancient Manchu Emperors had tried, from olden times, to push a large number of migrants to come to Outer Mongolia to set up families, plant crops, and extract natural resources. Some intelligent Mongolians in the military and the civil service pointed out that that this could be a way of occupying Mongolia. The people were exhausted and suffered from labor shortages. Households from the same area helped each other and tried to find methods to adapt to the conditions under which they lived. They co-operated in felt making, took turns beating the wool into felt, rounding up the mares together for the spring and summer milking, birthing the lambs, exchanging the lambs and kids between milking partners, co-operating on repairing the wells, delivering the horses to the rich new pastures, and sharing in the migration of the animals.

When I came back to "the teacher's" *gers* this time, I knew the people and their characters. They knew me too and said happily that since I had grown so much I could now look after the sheep and the camels. Thus I was assigned to replace Orgodol, the sheep herder, to tend the sheep on my own. It was birthing time for the sheep. I remember quite clearly now how tiring it was to carry my shoulder bag and follow the herds along the steppe on foot in the melting snows of spring. However, I wasn't allowed to speak about these conditions, and had to keep my concerns to myself. The days passed during which the sheep gave birth, and I tried to make the weak lambs and kids suckle. One day "the teacher's" Princess said that compared to last year, the boy wasn't bad. She said that I had grown up so much that I could domesticate the camels which needed to be trained to be gentle. Thus, unfortunately, I had to handle this difficult task. Orgodol was relieved from sheep herding, so he could care for the 2-3 year old camels and horses, so I was also left to herd the sheep.

Thus I came to look after "the teacher's" sheep and rode the half-tamed camels, which Orgodol had trained but had failed to tell me about their lead reins and nosepegs. Still, I did not miss a day during the last month of spring into the summer when these cranky and bucking animals startled the sheep which were grazing in the pastures. After that, Orgodol took over the training of the two to three year old unbroken horses. I saw that Orgodol didn't use great strength but subdued the horses by gently scratching and stroking them, which made them more amenable to wearing a saddle and bridle without having to worry about their jumping away or starting. A rider needed to move at a soft, slow gait and guide the animal with the reins so,

without hurrying, it would go in any direction. So I rode horses trained by Orgodol for two months in the summer while I herded "the teacher's" sheep. Orgodol's trained horses made it easier on my feet, and I felt better and less thirsty and, compared to last year, more confident.

When I was sad or bored while pasturing the sheep, I thought that even when one is under someone else's authority, one can learn something useful, and I wanted to help my parents with what I had learned. From the middle of the spring until the end of the summer, I herded "the teacher's" sheep like his slave. He taught me almost nothing, though I provided a lot of help taming the wild horses and camels. But it is obvious that someone who gets help is greedy for more.

# 4

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## Living at the Official Ministry for Two Months

The banner office of the Tusheet Prince sent an announcement to the door of the “subject teacher” during the first month of fall that a two month period of duty, or one’s turn for service, had come. I was chosen because of the shortage of time and since not everyone could do this job. I was let out of my responsibilities herding sheep, and I freed myself from the clutches of the Princess but I was anxious, not knowing what to expect. Before leaving, I gave my old patched clothes to my father who had heard indirectly that new clothes would be necessary so he brought them to me.

The “subject teacher” gathered all sorts of new silk *deels*, a short blue jacket with an insignia on it, and a dragon patterned ceremonial *deel* with an apron so that the horse could barely carry the big black saddle bag. Food and cutlery were prepared including a vegetable and meat dish, and so many other things that the horse could carry in the big black saddle bag. As I was about to go, the rich people who lived nearby, led by deputy banner leader Tsedevsüren and Dendev, brought a feast. While drinking *airagh* and vodka, they discussed among themselves that soon the office of the *aimag* assembly of the main Tusheet Khanate would distribute the payment of the large monetary debt which resulted from the balance of the principal and interest to the Chinese trader Bouant to the banner princes. One northerner suggested allocating the burden of this debt to the people who lived in the Gobi since he was going to build a monastery with a statue of the living Buddha and should, therefore, be treated differently.

As I got ready to leave, Father said to me: “Be responsible in the places of important people. Respect the words of your master teacher and learn as much as you can.” Then he kissed me. When I rode the relay on the instructions of the banner office, I carried my writing equipment wrapped in

a cloth and tied around me like a belt. When involved in riding the relay, the rider would reach places mid-relay where, as is typical of our way of life, he would stop and rest at the stone *oboos*.<sup>1</sup> The wise messenger would rest there for a while but those who weren't so savvy would ride on. As soon as I reached the *oboo*, I dismounted and repaired my saddle girth, and then we rode two relays without letting the horses relax too much and in due course, we arrived at the first government relay station from the center, where we passed the night.

At the first relay station from the center, the attendants were anxious on seeing "the subject teacher" and to honor him put out a table, spread out a quilted mattress, and bowed and scraped. Then a sheep's leg was boiled into a stew. But the attendant limited me and a courier to cold, boiled water with milk and later to some milk curds. The relay coachman joked that "what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander."

The next morning, "the subject teacher" was pleased with the relay horse and so the mount was saddled with the black saddle bag. When we were riding south across the blue mountain to the relay road, I asked the name of the mountain, which was called Delger Khangai, and the place to the north-east was called Sozh. When we approached it, there was a large *ger* with a red decorative cloth cover over the smoke hole and a smaller *ger* to the right of it with bright colored trim. To its left were several black *gers*. I followed the officials from behind into the tent residence and saw a "shaahai" made of thick leather and long bamboo sticks hung up on the sides of the tent.<sup>2</sup> Anxiously, I went inside, took several steps, and knelt down.

The officials occupied the honored part of the *ger* and discussed how they could divide the official tasks among themselves and later took "the teacher" to his smaller tent and left, wishing him a good rest. "The subject teacher" commanded me to take charge of the kitchen and the fire and to take over all the cooking utensils in the *ger*. Someone I didn't know did the stock taking. Meanwhile, people could hardly lift the black saddle bags and bring them to the *ger* where "the subject teacher" gave instructions to me on how to put the *deels* away in the trunks and cupboards and how to separate the drinking and eating things in the cupboards. Then I had to make tea and cook the evening meal. In fact, when I was wondering what to cook, "the teacher" ordered me to make pasta soup from the flour, measuring out three handfuls of flour, mincing and cutting up one cup of meat into thin slivers, boiling two ladles of water and two measures of salt. Then I was to take a measure of white flour and roll it out into thin rounds to fry with grease in a pot after putting in the slivers of meat. Then I was given clear instructions on how to prepare this very quickly by boiling the water and immediately getting the mixed meat and salt ready. I put all of this together,

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1. A pile of stones and other objects; they play an important role in shamanism.

2. A tool of torture used by the Manchus.

added salt, and then dished it out into bowls. I didn't do too good a job with this meal. Sometimes I was scolded and admonished if the flavor was poor and the food wasn't too good.

However, I wasn't punished nor was I sent home and after a week, I learned to cook the pasta my "teacher" liked. Henceforth I became familiar with the settlement and started producing *bansh* or boiled meat dumplings, *bootz* or steamed meat dumplings, and *khooshuur* or fried meat dumplings. With increased experience, I pleased my "teacher" by cooking them myself. But my "teacher" was very strict and made me compulsively clean and polish things again and again. I had to boil the milk tea over a very hot fire, stirring it many times. I had to boil joints of meat and simmer the soup so it would not have dregs in its meaty juice. Each day there was unceasing work with barely a moment for oneself.

At first, because I was clumsy and slow, I couldn't do the work very well and had to keep redoing each task. I also realized that I had little opportunity to study writing because I had to meet the great demands of work. However, I came to understand that though I had to get up early each morning, if I prepared my work the previous evening, I could cleverly find some time from the demands of work to copy the letters. In my spare time, I was asked by the banner clerks to write orders or travel documents. My mistakes were pointed out to me so I could improve my writing skills. Even so, I didn't write every day and was urged by "the teacher" to do this and that and so was barely able to find time for my writing.

In becoming more familiar with banner clerks, I realized that there were two types of clerks: (1) those who were assistant clerks who did the paper work that was sent between the banner offices and the *aimags* and (2) the apprentice clerks who would do the paper work and write the documents within the banner office itself and between four *sums*, twenty-five *bags*,<sup>3</sup> and thirty-seven monasteries.<sup>4</sup> Some days there would be public notices with lots of words and complicated meanings, which couldn't be copied in time. So when they were anxious because they were behind schedule, the clerks asked me to help copy one or two notices. I even increased the amount of writing I did and though I really wanted time off, I couldn't take it and had to conceal my mistakes from "the teacher." However, the clerks corrected my errors and sent off the documents. I heard the clerks talking among themselves about "the teacher" who was now the leading official. Most of the problems "the teacher" handled himself, so the banner Prince would only see the final documents before he signed them. "The teacher" used the banner Prince's name himself, and officials writing the drafts copied down whatever "the teacher" said, struggling to catch every word.

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3. An administrative unit within a *sum*.

4. Administrative divisions within an *aimag*.

One day three Chinese men came to the banner office by official transport. Each was holding a walking stick and wearing a long black gown and a round silk hat. The leading Chinese official gave the banner officials six meters of silken material which was enough for a *deel* for each of them; the draft writers received crepe for their *deels*, and the clerks got *tazoor* (dough rolled in sugar). After that, he gave an order that came from the chairman of the Tüsheet Khan's *aimag* office demanding immediate payment of all debts owed to Bouant's firm, a payment amounting to tens of thousands of *taels* of silver from both the interest and the principal. Bayart was sent to collect the money, and there was a notice from the banner office to the officials stating that Bayart would also require two fully equipped *gers* as well as the money.

The officials in the banner Prince's offices hurried to serve and quite soon two fully equipped *gers* were provided from the Khalkha banner. The attendants at the local relay stations, on the other hand, were commanded to take turns constantly taking orders and serving the Chinese with the food they desired. These same relay servants did their best to properly carry out the orders and bought at high prices or on credit the white flour, vegetables, salt, soy sauce, Chinese pickles, vinegar, etc. from the trader Ongol who had settled near the station. They did everything to serve these Chinese who came to claim their money but between themselves, they hoped the Chinese men would soon leave.

One day, the officials of the government bureau invited the three Chinese officials to the banner office residence because it was necessary to talk things over with each honored Chinese. Now in our banner many people were ruined by drought. There was little money in hand so it was desirable to settle the debts with animals rather than cash. For the sake of future Chinese/Mongolian friendship, the Mongolians asked the Chinese to consider accepting payment in herds to fulfill their obligations. Even though the Mongolians offered guarantees, the Chinese refused to accept animals and demanded silver. The Chinese maintained that there was no order from the *aimag* council's chairman to settle the debt with animals, so they did not understand the Mongolians' request, and raised their voices stating "if you wish to explain this to your people, work through the Embassy here" and they left. The officials started discussing what they would do and decided that they would repay the principal in silver and pay the interest in sheep and camels. They decided to present this proposal to the Chinese with fifty silver ingots and a blue silk scarf for each person.

That day the leader, dressed in ceremonial clothes, and other officials went to the *ger* of the Chinese who were pressing for the repayment of the debt. The senior Chinese official, Bayart, sat and grimaced, and said that the Mongolians were talking nonsense as the Mongolian leader asked that his words be forgiven, and he presented Bayart with fifty ounces of silver and

silk scarves as a symbol of friendship. Two of the Chinese men who were lying down with their hands behind their heads jumped up, and all three were smiling. They invited the officials and the clerks to join them for black tea, cigarettes were opened, and treats of sugared candy were put in a dish. The three Chinese hesitated and talked among themselves and said it was possible to accept the proposal. However, the value of the animals could not be fixed because they had to make sure that the best cattle were sent. The price would be discussed each time and until then the price couldn't be agreed on. These discussions were recorded by the clerk.

The banner office officials returned to the pavilion to decide how to go about this. The debt to Bouant was expected to come from the *sums* and the *bag*. To raise the necessary money, they changed the wording of the *aimag* office chairman's order so it read like the banner office's order. My "teacher" proposed omitting payments from the northern *sums* and *bags* because they were building a Tibetan lamasery with a Maitreya Buddha<sup>5</sup> of about eighty cubits, which would be important to the area. Most of the debt was distributed among the *sums* in the southern desert areas, which had been badly affected by the drought. Thus sixteen couriers were sent to each area with this order. But the commander of the southern area, Buted from Demberel *sum*, threw the couriers out and refused to pay the money owed to Bouant's shop and accused the officials of the banner office of corruption.

The culmination of this problem was that representatives, appointed by the banner office, were sent to arrest Buted. Two days later Buted was tied up in the banner office while officials screamed at him in anger as he knelt or sat by the door of the large *ger*. Buted was accused of rebelling against the State and was beaten with a cudgel until his bones showed. Having been forcibly bound across the chest by a servant, another servant shouted at him and beat him with a board. Then, reinforced reed sticks, sharpened to a point and immersed in water, crackled as they were whipped across Buted's buttocks as he lay down. The servants took turns beating him and soon his buttocks reddened and began to swell and bleed. If the servants did not beat Buted until his bones showed, they were threatened with being beaten in the same way. These floggings by the servants were so brutal they frightened me and made me look away. However, Buted was tough and brave and didn't flinch. He said that these cruel officials acted illegally and were susceptible to bribes, and that this matter had to be tried in court. But skin that has to tolerate such treatment inevitably becomes worn, and under the terrific heat of the sun, he became numb and fainted. They dragged him away with his hands cuffed and his feet hobbled, and they burnt yellow felt.

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5. The Buddha of the Future.

The smell and the smoke from the burning felt awakened him as I heard the officials saying, "All this was done to keep him in order."

The next few days Buted's flayed body was so feverish that he was at death's door. So the ministers said this criminal needed to be watched but not treated kindly. If the guards lost this long suffering man, they would have received a severe sentence. The banner office clerks and the servants quietly visited Buted whose buttocks bore deep greenish wounds, which were bursting open and dripping a bloody secretion. In addition, both his legs were swollen and aching, but he couldn't touch them as both his hands and feet were bound, and the flesh stuck to the fetters, causing him to suffer horribly. There was also an unpleasant smell, which made one feel great pity for Buted about whose situation this saying applied: "Other people don't like to hear the truth. Life is hard for a person who speaks the truth." These sinful clerks and servants themselves whispered this.

This was the first time in my life that I experienced a man being tortured and had dirt and sand rubbed into his wounds. My mind seemed without nerves as I took in Buted's fear and suffering. Combined with the great pity I had for him, my knees started to shake and my heart began to throb. Henceforth, whenever I heard shouting and the cracking sound of a cudgel in the banner Prince's residence, I didn't appear and kept my distance.

One day the chief lama visited my "teacher" at his residence, having a long ceremonial scarf and ten *taels* of silver ready. He needed more money and so showed the budget with all the expenses for finishing the eighty cubit statue of the Maitreya Buddha and asked an official to take care of this case. Afterwards the banner office officials assembled for a meeting and talked about the expense of building a giant Buddha, the expenses of which shouldn't just be covered by the northern *sums* and *bags* only, since many people would worship there. This sacred statue was seen as common property, and it was a good deed. Thus the money and accounts amounting to 10,000 *taels* had to be allotted from each *sum* and *bag*. The money would then be spent to build the monastery for the lama as provided under the authority of the officials. This case became a "cause célèbre" for the relay station attendants because it revealed what Buted was fighting for.

The banner office officials mutually flattered each other in trying to cover up their unjust decision and announced that all the people had agreed to build the eighty cubit Maitreya. It was urgent to send out the announcement to the banner office clerks so they worked day and night to finish this work. They asked me to participate in this process, and I willingly consented to combine our writing. Thus it was evident that the thirty-seven lamaseries had a serious weapon by which they, as a class, could cruelly exploit the pious people under the pretext of building the Great Buddha. This served as quite a nice whip to exploit the wealth of the people for the lamas' own profit.

I lived at the Ministry for two months and did service as a guide for a well known Minister who valued my work as equal to fifteen goats. However, our "teacher" gave an order to the treasurer/storekeeper Tsogt at the banner office to provide us with only 5 *tsen* (one-tenth of a *tael*) worth of silver, from which we had to pay for our room, though the leftover food was free. Generally, apprentice clerks in the banner office received two goats a month, assistant clerks got two female sheep, and other ministers were given three wethers or castrated male sheep. On top of that, I learned from listening to the other clerks, these Ministers would divide and share the fines they had accrued and so would enrich themselves by illegally fining people. The banner officials visited the residence of three Chinese men frequently and were treated with the best food and drink, and under the pretext of improving the collection of debts, they sent extra people to gather payment in earrings, saddle straps, tinder pouches, metal strap ornaments, tobacco and snuff pans, and pipe cleaning picks.

On the other hand, the southern *bags* sent castrated camels and rams, and cows which were appraised by the Chinese at prices below local prices. The Chinese stressed that they had not come to discuss trading policies and set prices for these beasts, which the Mongolians had to accept. Then the banner officials said those animals accepted by the Chinese would be branded with Chinese characters and would be forcefully allocated to the herders. If they lost these animals, they would have to pay a high price, putting the Mongolian people in these southern areas under a double burden.

Meanwhile the officials of the banner office kept doing their duties and as the end of their terms approached, they would postpone the difficult cases so the next Ministers could handle them. It was common to see many cases put off for many years, and the files kept in a big cupboard. One of the cases they wished to close concerned the old man Erenduu who was in a dispute with the old woman Togotch over a five year old castrated camel, and they argued constantly. Erenduu lodged a complaint about his camel, and some lazy Ministers wanted to postpone it, but others said that the matter was so simple that its indecision could damage their reputations. It was, therefore, decided that Erenduu would be beaten twenty-five times with a wooden stick and the old woman would also be beaten twenty-five times, but with a shoe sole. However, since both old people refused to change their testimony and take an oath, the banner official handling the case was at his wit's end and decided to make them undergo "the ordeal" by which accused people in a dispute are forced to pass under a line on which were suspended unclean objects such as a human hip bone, a woman's underclothes stained with menstrual blood, or an old leather hobble, and then take an oath.

A day passed, and the banner official's messenger and a horse groom went together with the people mentioned above to the Delger Khangai Mountains

where one could find two posts raised with tethering lines stretched between them, on which they hung a dead person's spinal column. There were trousers with a woman's menstrual blood, an old hobble strap, and other dirty and foul things that were placed side by side. The two people disputing over the camel were seated in front of this line, with the human skull containing the dog's blood. A person who dared to go under these dirty things hanging from the line had to splash dog's blood from the skull against the sky. If his claim were wrong, within three days the sky god would kill him.

The old woman Togotch went under this ordeal, but Erenduu did not slip below the rope so the woman got the five year old gelding camel, which was the subject of the dispute. The old man Erenduu asserted that in the next life we would see the truth and with these words he shook off his *deel* and rode away. Peoples' blind religious beliefs were followed without looking at who was right or wrong, as we can see from this case.

On account of this, before very long there was a replacement at the banner office. The storekeeper/bursar Tsogt gave me five *tsen* of silver for being a groom to the Ministers, but I took the money to the banner office and asked for writing equipment, receiving five new writing brushes, inks, and fifteen squares of paper. I then took all of this and packed the "teacher's" things and we returned to the relay. The horses were ridden slowly to the banner office because their riders followed the rules. When they left the banner office, however, their riders ignored the relay services rules since all the officials were in a hurry to leave. Actually, in the long run, Ministers and clerks who were dismissed went at full speed, which often led to weakness and injury for the horses.

Back at home, Lady Dashdavaa said to her husband, "the teacher" must be tired from drinking black tea in the heat, though it was I who had done all the work. But I was told by the Princess that I must have had a good rest for two months, learning to write and not looking after the sheep! At this time father humbly asked "the teacher" for permission to have me help herd the animals since he was short of manpower. "The teacher" however, gave no clear answer. Lady Dashdavaa, however, told him that she also was short of workers and that some people had to be made servants, especially his child who, for the past two months, had done nothing but study writing. Mr. Luvsansambuu, the uncle of "the teacher," intervened at this point, saying that I had been away from home a long time and that my father had come from far away. He convinced his nephew to let me go home, saying that I would return to do the work demanded of me. "The teacher" let me go with father who was pleased, and I quickly went back to our *ger*, thereby calming my mother's anxieties.

# 5

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## Every Man Is Different

A servant who worked in the banner office had a life of suffering not known to many. The nobility did whatever they wished, and the pressure of waiting on them could be “killing.” Even so, the experience was valuable. I told my parents about all I had undergone and learned and though they listened, they also warned me about what was irrelevant and what should be left unspoken. And then I began my own routine of herding for my mother and father. In fall the grass was green and thickened with juice. The animals needed to drink water twice a day and graze in suitable pastures where they could rest so that they would grow fat. The sheep and cows were sent out to the pastures in the early morning when they were good and fresh. They drank and later, at high noon, they lay down on the steppe to rest. In the afternoon, they grazed again, and as the sun went down, they had more water. My father taught me that the flocks would have a high fertility rate and produce young without loss if they were pastured in the rich, green new fields in the fall. If the animals were fat and in robust health in winter and spring, my father taught me that they would produce newborns without birth defects. If the grass had dew on it in the morning, don’t pasture the herds in the narrow ravines and mountain ridges until they were dry. If their feet got wet, the fetlocks of the sheep and the hooves of the goats would soften and leave them open to necrobacillosis. Cows prefer places with soft soil, moss, and green grass, while the sheep and goats prefer different types of pastures. If the cows have no access to wormwood and corispermum, they don’t gain weight properly. Later I noticed that cows which grazed in such pastures would have swollen stomachs and would not become fat.

One should be instructed to water the herds in an upland stream where the water flows fresh. They must not drink muddy water, and efforts should

be made to have the horses and stallions, which will push and squash each other in their thirst, drink the water from the well buckets and the trough one by one. Let the sheep and goats drink water in groups of about twenty. After watering the animals, don't rush them. The pastures should be suitable for herding. In summer and fall, stop at the wide terraces which are safe from flooding and offer the herds a place to lie down where the air is fresh. Pay attention to the ravines because wolves can hide themselves there.

When the fall turns chilly, and the grass becomes yellow tipped, herd the cattle where there is cleistogenes and reddening glasswort in the ravines and valleys with water and soda nearby. The driving of the herds shouldn't be rough and should ensure that the herds do not lose flesh by sweating. In the last month of fall, keep the large livestock and most of the small animals in a cold place so they are hardened for the winter move. They must begin to become accustomed to the frigidity of winter bit by bit so they don't suddenly become emaciated. In late August, the winter quarters, where goosefoot, corispermum, etc. grow, must be cleaned of rubbish. The compacted urine and dung of the sheep and goats are peeled away, and insects are removed to make a dry place for the herds to lie in. When the first snow comes, make sure that all the herds have enough water. The horses, especially, should be given water and shouldn't be allowed to eat snow since it can lead a mare to miscarry her foal. Similarly in winter and spring, we learn from the old people, that the thirst of the herds is not soothed by drinking snow and so water should be gotten from wells.

In this way, I had cared for my animals following the advice of my father, mother, relatives, and neighbors. And after all this labor, I had reached fifteen years and had experienced both good and bad in my work. Meanwhile, my father showed great initiative and found a well-written book with good calligraphy so I could continue studying writing. In my free time, I tried to copy the script. Someone who knew this writing gave me encouragement and praised me, saying that I soon would be a scribe at the banner office. On hearing this, my father would say that it wasn't everything being a scribe at the banner office. One also needs to understand the true meaning of the books and be able to write correctly what people say. It is necessary to give it your best. Keep learning and you will achieve mastery.

There were rumors that our "subject teacher" would again take me to work for him. Khaisandai, who served as an official occasionally, also wanted me to work for him in the banner office where the scribes gathered to plan the year's allotment of work, which took a month. My father immediately agreed and was happy that I would not have to serve in "the teacher's" place. My clothes were prepared in a hurry and though last time I was sent off to work with no provisions, this time I had fried bread and curds and cream so I wouldn't be hungry. For two days I herded his camels

and then we left on the relay together with official Khaisandai. When we arrived at the banner office, the officials and scribes assembled with all of their equipment in part of the *ger*. Earlier, I had prepared food and drink and cleaned up the rubbish for "the teacher" so I was quite accustomed to this sort of work and was not upset doing it each day. Since everyone is different, I took the trouble to ask official Khaisandai what I should cook for him. He told me to cook what was simplest and most economical so I would have more free time to study my words and letters and work on my writing. In this way, if I arranged my work each day I would have the opportunity to study and for this I was respectful of Khaisandai. Without fail, I tried to find the free time to practice my writing, combining both work and study, and was ever more eager to work hard with the passing days of the month.

The official Khaisandai did not miss out on my daily writing assignment and studied the mistakes in my letters, pointing out the errors so the shapes could become even more elegant. He showed my writing to the other officials in the banner office and agreed that I would, as an apprentice scribe, do regular, scheduled service the first month each spring. Thus all the scribe officials gathered to calculate the last year's duties and taxes collected from all the four *sums* and twenty-five *bags*. They also discussed the matter of the debt to the greedy Chinese merchants and distributed it. All this work had to be settled within a month's time. Khaisandai was below the senior officials in rank, but he was perceived very differently from the other officials, partly because he was on duty in the relay service. The topic of competent paper work relating to these issues was spoken about at this time. Then the *sum* commander Sürensosor joined the meeting and the assistant scribe Baldandorj, who worked for Sürensosor, helped people with these matters when he had free time. Dealing with the Chinese merchants and making the payments to the money lender were also discussed. After an earlier meeting with the leader in the Manchu office, one of our Mongolians transmitted the claim to the people about the heavy burden of service which, amazingly, might be avoided because the new two-year old reign of the Manchu Emperor Xuantong might have been overthrown through a revolution in China. If there was a change, then our Khalkha Mongols had the opportunity on their own initiative to try to establish their independence, but this would best be known to the Most Merciful Grand Lama (The Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu). The official Khaisandai said that Outer Mongolia, from the news he had heard, was in the midst of two huge States and shared the vast frontiers with both. In the southeast, Japan completely dominated Korea, and the Manchu Chinese used the northeast regions to implement their own greedy policies. "In my opinion, it would be appropriate to set up a connection with the Russian Tsar so that Mongolia would free itself from the Manchu Chinese and be a sovereign nation. And it seems that the great

lamaseries and the nobility in Ikh Khüree<sup>1</sup> should discuss this possibility. . . . But we would eventually know more about this if we stayed calm and kept silent."

Before very long, the clerks and the officials assembled to set up the service arrangements, fix the records, arrange and collect all the material concerning the service documents, which were to be handed over to the banner office, and packed to leave for their homes. I started the relay after leaving the banner office and went to Khaisandai's *ger* and then on to my home. My father and mother were very happy that there had been no mistake about my opportunity to study writing while cooking for the ministry officials in the banner office. Before this, I had to follow the subject "teacher" and do all the hard work inside the *ger* as well as doing the cooking. But Khaisandai didn't think he himself was privileged, nor was he "stuck up," and so gave me free time to study and didn't control the time I spent preparing meals. In my free time, I practiced my writing and was able to report to mother and father that the official Khaisandai had arranged my appointment as an apprentice scribe because I had made so much progress in my writing. My father said that Khaisandai was of serf origin and not from the high nobility. Since Khaisandai was born of the people, father claimed, he understood their lives whereas Chimeddavaa, of noble birth, could not understand the people.

The children of the nobility or their relatives generally filled the position of apprentice scribes while the common people or serfs did not usually get these jobs and were notified of their other allotments or duties. Father said that the children of the nobles were the ones promoted to the positions of assistant scribe regardless of their knowledge while the children of serfs, no matter how capable, were rarely promoted. I feared, alas, that this was the case. Having the chance through my hard work and practice (in writing) to get away from the cruel Prince (Chimeddavaa) for one or two months reminded me to conscientiously study and work on my letters. While I had hoped to help my family with their private herds in the next few months, I was repeatedly called to work for the subject "teacher" and to train his fierce and wild young horses, twist the manes and tails of the horses into ropes for the house, beat the wool of the hair that had fallen out of the camels, twist the camels' wool into halters for the foals, collect dung for fuel, water the herds, help in the making of felt and in the moving of the herds, do other seasonal work, and, because there was little time for milking the mares, help tether them.

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1. Refers to Urga or present-day Ulaan Baatar.

# 6

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## The Strong One Is Always Right

By the end of the first half of 1911, the Khalkha warrior Prince of the first rank on the Manchu scale who was named Khandorj, along with the high ranking lama Tserenchimed and others, were Mongolian representatives to the Russian Tsar, and they established relations with the Russian Kingdom. Actually, since the State was concerned that a coup d'état was likely to occur which would separate the Mongolians from the Manchus, a bureau was established in Urga [capital city] and the Tüsheet Khan and the Sechen Khan mobilized a few soldiers from the *aimags* or banners and trained them in military science. Some banner offices provided the soldiers with education. There were all sorts of rumors circulating in the capital. In December, the Manchu representative Sando was confronted by the poor and the indigent lamas who were protesting. Because of these protests, Sando and his minister were banished and became the subject of public mockery as they fled across the Mongolian frontier.

After this, the Khans of the Khalkha *aimags* led by the administrator of Urga and some of the nobles of high rank joined with the people to plan a national freedom movement in which the people would shake off the domination of the Manchu Chinese and organize self rule under the honorable Emperor, the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, or the Grand Lama or Living Buddha. On December 16, 1911 in the year of the reign of Emperor Xuantong, the Bogdo Khan (or Jebtsundamba), King of Autonomous Mongolia, was raised to the throne. A government ceremony was enacted, and the four *aimags*<sup>1</sup> announced an independent country for the people of Mongolia.

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1. Khalkha Mongolia was divided into four *aimags* ruled by the Tüsheet Khan, the Sechen Khan, the Sayin Noyan Khan, and the Jasagtu Khan.

Offerings were then made in a ceremony to the Khutukhtu. It seemed that establishing their government was comforting for the people. During the reign of the Manchu Emperor, the local nobility and the officials had the head of household—poor and rich alike—on Tsaagan Sar,<sup>2</sup> as the sun rose, burn incense and juniper on a high place while kowtowing to the south. Now all men and women prayed in the direction of Urga<sup>3</sup> before the emblem of the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu—the Grand Lama of Urga, offering the choicest milk or tea.

At this time the Mongolian calendar, named for the reign title of the King of Autonomous Mongolia 1911–1924, was substituted for the Manchu calendar, Ikh Khüree became the capital, and the government was divided into five Ministries: Internal, External, Military, Treasury, and Judiciary. After this, the Uriyangkhai from Lake Khövsgöl in Western Mongolia joined together with other people and agreed to make up one country, which would include the Great Dornod Khan *aimag* with twelve banners, the Zunghars—left and right—with four banners, Zavchin *aimag* with two banners, the seven Altai Uriyangkhai banners, the three Torgut banners, the two Tannu Tuvan banners, the one Oirat (Khoshdin) banner, the several Kazakh banners in Inner Mongolia at Kholon camp, and also the Shilingol League, Avaganar, the East and West banners, Ujumchin, the Jirmin League with seven banners, Zoo Uud league with five banners, the Great 100 League with five banners, Ulaantsav League with five banners, Yestin League of Kharin banner, and the eight Chahar banners. After the unification, some of the authorities from these banners, together with these banner princes and officials from northern Mongolia, served in the five ministries in the capital Ikh Khuree. Among some of the banner princes in the Chahar territory, the officials tried to increase their ranks since they were familiar with Manchu characters and legal matters.<sup>4</sup>

People took up arms all over the country while in the Uliastai and Khovd settlements they expelled the cruel Manchu and Chinese soldiers. This was a chance to abolish some of the toughest relay services dating back generations which had been established by the Manchu office. Commonly known as the fourteen areas of the Kharchin and the twenty of the Khalkha, they carried out the cruel and aggressive Manchu policies for colonization in Outer Mongolia. These people had to take on the burden of service themselves, so the people of Kharchin origin were organized into two banners while the Khalkha moved into two banners with their own people. Outer Mongolia joined with parts of Inner Mongolia to struggle, step by step, in this new progressive movement for their rights against the Manchu Chi-

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2. The Mongolian New Year.

3. The old name for the modern capital city of Ulaan Baatar.

4. The Chahars were based in Inner Mongolia and had much more to do with the Chinese and the Manchus than the Khalkhas of Outer Mongolia.

nese. For the people of Outer Mongolia, especially, this was a major step forward.

The Emperor Huangtong, also called Yuan Shikai,<sup>5</sup> tried secretly to negotiate with the Russian Tsar's government so that he could gain more control and prevent the involvement of the Russian Empire in Outer Mongolia. In this way, as will later become clearer, time was lost because those in power remained confused and isolated.

Meanwhile I was summoned again by my subject "teacher" to come to work. However, one day, when father was trying to catch a horse with his *urga*,<sup>6</sup> the animal darted forward at a gallop and slipped and fell, injuring father and breaking his leg. He needed to be taken care of so I hoped I could stay home and skip working for the subject "teacher." However, the Prince offered little compassion, reminding me that our household had been given as serfs to the nobility and that we had to follow certain rules and give the Prince our unqualified respect. He then threatened to punish me by sending me alone to the capital to ride the relay with the coachman from the Tumet people. Meanwhile, father's injured leg recovered within little more than forty days. I did all the work until he could do it, even though at home he had to use a walking stick to get around. Then I followed our old neighbor, Chimed, and rode to the capital to work at the Tumet station for six months.

The people from the Tumet station trained the horses for the civil servants, providing service for the authorities of the autonomous government ministries of the Interior, Exterior, Military, Treasury, and Judiciary. It fell to me to arrange and draft the allotment of trained horses for the porters, etc. of the chief Minister of Finance and the Deputy Ministers, for officials, bursars, clerks, couriers, porters, etc. The Ministers gave special orders for certain mounts or pairs of horses, demanding animals of the best physique which were clean, gentle, and ambled nicely. Those who had been ridden too long were rejected. If these demands were not met, we were scolded, whipped, or thrashed by the cruel nobles and officials. Sometimes suitable horses had to be bought at high prices, and this situation was used to the advantage of the horse traders in the capital who made a good profit selling to the Tumet and others connected to the relay, though they were careful not to talk about their transgressions.

I was only a relay attendant and didn't have to fulfill any other responsibilities than delivering the horses, saddled and ready, to the *gers* of the higher nobility, officials, and civil servants early each morning and collecting those same horses every evening to graze them at night. In the evening, some of the officials, especially the scribes or the clerks, would take these

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5. Yuan Shikai was the President of the Chinese Republic from 1912 to 1916 and was not an Emperor.

6. A lasso, by which horses were captured.

horses and ride around Ikh Khüree depriving them of their grazing time and so, without food, these animals became emaciated.

Besides, I worked as a messenger delivering papers from the five Ministries, the *aimag* banner office, and representative offices to the first relay station in all four directions, and I also brought back the horses. I took turns from the first relay station and went to the east to Bayanzürkh, to the south to Türgen, to the west to Sharkov, and to the north to Khuimandal. The higher officials appointed messengers to go with the requisitioned horses and bring them back. The custom was to continuously beat and be brutal to the people involved. The attendant to the High Lama, the service attendant, the gatekeeper, the clergy officials and the police who patrolled the Yellow Palace in Urga on horseback and foot were particularly cruel. In fact, those attending to the horses were so afraid that their hearts beat violently!

The Tumet local relay station was located to the west from Zuun Selbe, to the southeast of Khunchuluun, and to the east of what is now the hospital center. In the bitter winter and spring, many hundreds of horses were herded there for the green grass, and that is why it was famous as the most difficult relay station of the four Khalkha *aimags*. This relay station was supported by two banners and *aimags* of the *khoshuus*<sup>7</sup> of the Tüsheet and Sechen Khans, and those who were most capable were supposed to be responsible for the supplies. In fact, however, the poor had to support the relay and went into debt when they failed in their payments and suffered from being so exploited. When these people had time off at the Tumet station, they would sit around in their *khashaa*, talking about their difficulties.

In the capital at that time, there were many lamas and princes, officials, clerks, and couriers wearing the hat with peacock feathers as their symbols of rank. There were ecclesiastical and secular ministers wearing their multicolored jackets who met here and there, looking like black crows as they swaggered and spoke in little groups with the deputy ministers, the Da Lama who was the administrator of Urga, and the chiefs of the five Ministries who sat in their green and yellow sedan chair carts. Several escorts from the north and south and from the mid-river area went in the direction of the palace following a red wooden bridge alongside the deputy ministers, the attendant of the high lama, the attendant, the doorkeeper, etc. who came continuously from the north and the south. The Dotroos, the Chahars, the Ordos, and the Barga princes ambled by in rubber-wheeled, horse-drawn carts that gave a smooth ride. The ordinary people as well as people like the Tumet relay workers were not allowed to cross this middle river bridge.

At this time, the capital was centralized sketchily into seven basic parts made up of the area to the south of the Selbe River, the southern area with

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7. Banners.

the King's quarters, the northern princely district, the area east of the Selbe River called the district of the Tüsheet Khan where the lay inhabitants and the Tibetans lived. To the east of that was the consular area, and the north central area was the religious center of the city. There were found the temple and the lamasery college with its thirty provincial temples, while to the west of this complex there was a broad street, to the north of which was located the Chinese joint stock company. Along the back of that street, several Chinese clay buildings could be found, as well as Chinese kiosks, where many people sat around. Further up this broad street were the shops and stalls of many Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian traders as well as the smith market. Thus this area was called the district of the eastern and western peddlers. Outside, under the jurisdiction of the Gandan Monastery were the Khujirbulan, Naiman district or Trade town, the Red Green Temple, and many other places.

The Tumet people who worked the local relay station also worked in these seven parts of Ikh Khüree, helping the secular nobles, clerks, and officials in and beyond the capital. Figures were provided for the number of horses to be collected in the evening, assembled in the morning, and then delivered every morning to each individual *ger* of those who wished to ride but didn't have the determination to get a horse. When there were rain or snow storms, it was often very hard to round up and deliver the horses who had to wait in the cold, trembling with hunger and thirst, while their masters gave their approval to the attendants.

These were the usual difficulties, but working within a feudal system, one had to confront humiliation, brutality, beatings and scoldings. Besides enduring the cruelty of the princes and officials, the civil servants involved in supplying horses had to drive them from *ger* to *ger*, often in the darkness, without the benefit of electric lights. A lantern was necessary whether inside or outside because the evenings were pitch black. The dark of night was very frightening because the narrow, dirty, stinking twisting streets were full of mud, and in the broader avenues, there were hillocks high with rubbish in which many dogs made their lairs. These stray dogs attacked the riders and their horses, which shied and reared. Even though one went out of one's way to avoid all of this, the noise of the dogs continued throughout the night and prevented people from sleeping or resting. In such a situation, the Tumet relay riders tied up the horses for the relay. During the six months of summer and fall that I served with the Tumet on the relay, there was a Tangut working in the Khujirbulan unit. Because, however, he had contracted intestinal typhoid from which he could never recover, he was discharged. This same Tangut was completely alone, ignorant of the country's places and conditions. Lonely and isolated, he lived inside a cave on the grounds of the royal Tüsheet Khan's enclosure, with its buildings with wooden eaves. As his illness worsened, he lay down and was feverish, and

he was watched over for several nights by those in the *khashaa*. A poor man named Baldan sold milk in the settlement and gave the Tangut food and drink every day. Then the Tūsheet Khan, whose *aimag* center was Erentei, was doing his periodic duty in the area, and he ordered that the Tangut be discarded with the rubbish.

This strict order was oppressive to the poor Baldan who had been taking care of the sick Tangut and felt sorry for him. Thus Baldan pulled three poles from his *ger* and, with some yellow felt, carried these on his back to the blacksmith and with Zagd, the grave digger, they made a tent, near the garbage dump, with the yellow felt draped over the poles in which the sick man could lie down. Baldan continued to bring him drink from his *ger*, but the Tangut soon died. Zagd carried the corpse on his back to the edge of the wilds and greedily took the yellow felt for himself. At this time, even though the poor people had nothing and received no help from the government, they still had compassion for and helped those who were alone and without relatives. I felt sorry when I heard people talking about the Tangut and others like him and the way they were just thrown on the rubbish heap near a prayer wheel or a stupa.

Many people, exhausted and suffering, were treated like stray dogs and thrown away to die. These people were robbed, and their labor was exploited by the secular and religious feudal lords, who at their own discretion, had set up the system. Meanwhile, the nobility established a ceremonial dress code which ran from spring through the first half of summer and meant wearing a *deel* with velvet cuffs, decorated or bejeweled knife and tinder powder boxes, and from then until mid-autumn a velvet hat, a thinly lined jacket, and a *deel* with silk cuffs, a light looking knife, and a tinder powder box and smoking pouch. Those who violated this dress code were levied fines to provide adequate candles and incense for the lamps of Buddha. Some obscene feudal lords led loose lives, making friends with beautiful young unmarried women by bribing them with gold, pearls, and the finest quality silk. Their disgusting lifestyle made them incur great debts, and the burden of these debts and their debts from gambling in dominoes were paid for with credit from Chinese merchants like Bouant, the trading partner in the capital who had lost a bet to Sodnomdorj, who worked in a Chinese firm, and Dashinxue. These debts were later paid by the local people who were like serfs.

At this time, in the capital, the majority of both the secular and clerical feudal lords wandered about the shops, and the owners of these shops offered them great feasts while, at the same time, cheating them into authorizing the repayment of vast amounts of debt. With a nod of the head, they were able to get both the principal and the interest on those debts allocated to the *khoshuus*, which stripped the people of their assets. The lower officials

and especially the scribes and relay attendants were continually anxious about the amount of the debt that would come from them.

My service with the Tumet relay was over, so I traveled home to my *ger* with Bat-Ochir, a man from our area. My father's broken leg had completely recovered, and he was proud that his son had survived what was considered the most difficult relay service. Doing so was regarded as a sign of being a real man and a good omen. Both father and mother praised my competence and hoped that I would stay with them for the three months of winter.

In this interval, our subject "teacher" Chimeddavaa advanced to the post of Prince of the Sixth Rank which increased his official authority to enserf people. As he became harsher, my parents and the people of the nearby *ails* and areas discussed his worsening behavior, referring to him as Prince Bavaa because it was taboo to use his real name. This name was not a title of respect but fear, and one local old man named Mr. Galsan maliciously derided the Prince calling him "Mr. Bavaa, the troublemaker." Because he didn't do any real work and made others serve him, many people made jokes about him, which reflected their loathing. Because of Prince Chimeddavaa's increased authority, he surpassed others in growing rich from taking bribes and deciding arbitrarily about people's property. In addition, he ordered people to work hard, commandeered me as his servant, appointed a retinue, and forced workers to provide their horses and camels for his own use. He demanded so much of people that they almost couldn't manage to do the work on their own homes.

When Chimeddavaa was called to work as an official in the Ministry of Finance of the Autonomous Government, I thought I might have the opportunity to rest from being his servant. According to the announcement, there was some hope that we might be free for a little while because the Princess Dashdavaa and her children were preparing to travel to the capital for a long time. But I wasn't able to escape the Prince's labors, though I did help my mother and father with their herds.

At this time, there was concern about the southern frontier. The Chinese government of Yuan Shikai aggressively sent soldiers and weapons to the southern and southeastern frontiers of Mongolia to suppress the Mongolians' national movement for independence. The Mongolian soldiers welcomed the fight. By a decree of the Supreme Religious leader of our state, our ministry, and the banner office, Prince Chagdarjav, the former financial minister, was appointed to command the southern frontier and the military groups. They completely smashed the common Chinese soldiers, and the news was announced that the Mongolian soldiers had crossed the Chinese frontier, and reached the city of Baotou. The soldiers who acted bravely were rewarded with red coral buttons, signifying the second rank as well as

with the titles of hero. The Chinese soldiers were slandered as "bandits with whiskers" by the local people.

The above mentioned government authorities of Yuan Shikai used force on the soldiers in Mongolia because all efforts to work out an agreement with the Russian monarchy had failed. Finally, this whole affair was concluded in 1915 when Russian, Chinese, and Mongolian representatives made a clear agreement, just as the representatives of the Mongolian government made plain its desire to protect its existing independence and sovereignty, even though the Russian government was strongly advocating autonomy of a sort for Outer Mongolia under the Russian monarchy. This condition was then presented to the Chinese. Inner Mongolia's hopes for autonomy were defeated, and it became dependent on China.

Thus the political situation of the Autonomous Outer Mongolian nation was, at this time, already strained and in flux. So the Chahars, who were Princes from Inner Mongolia who had staffed the five Ministries, had to return to Inner Mongolia, leaving only a few loyal Inner Mongolians in the capital, among whom was Sumja, who was leader of a *khoshuu*. Before 1915, I was in the countryside, and all announcements from the five Ministries related only to the rights and profits of the secular and clerical feudal lords. No mention was made about the life of the people whose difficulties and distress were so evident.

## Time to Begin Lending a Hand with the Writing Work

An opportunity arose to be freed briefly from my obligations while I was ensnared to my subject "teacher." Near the end of May in 1914, I met with the assistant scribe Baldandorj who was assigned to the Tüsheet Khan *aimag* banner office, and he promised to get me a clerk's position. So I went to the capital and to the home of Baldandorj to assume a position of clerk. Each day I cooked for Baldandorj and made tea and helped him with the writing. I worked from the first until we finished in the fourth month of summer. People from the area had to work in shifts, protecting the banner office at night. When people were sick, other people filled in for them and were paid 15–20 *mungs* (1/100 of a *tugrik*) but the payment wasn't fixed. The Russian currency at this time was in red and white copper or nickel coins. During the day, I did what suited Baldandorj and was eager to help him with his writing and in any other way. On alternate days, I worked as a guard until dawn in the *aimag* and *khashaa* for those who were ill or busy. I also worked with iron, and the sounds from such work were heard even before Baldandorj got up to boil the tea. From my work as a guard, I made enough money to buy meat at the store where the offal from two sheep and each head and leg cost ten *mung*. The rest of my money was spent on other food, which I sometimes cooked up into a stew with Baldandorj, and there was even some left over.

I worked in this way for three months and earned six *taels* a month from Baldandorj, so I made eighteen *taels*. I used the money to become well-established and buy a saddle and a bridle. With the extra money, I purchased cotton for *deels* for my parents, which I took to them when I rode the relay. When I arrived, mother and father greeted me with great happiness, praising me and cheering me up. In turn, I helped my parents

and thought that helping others would always be beneficial. Thus, with people in the neighborhood, we worked together to dig new wells, repair and fix them so the water stayed fresh, and we also made felt together. I didn't begrudge the work entailed in preparing to move the animals and participating in the work of herding and helping to find the lost animals of Bavaa, "the teacher." I also aided in rounding up the mares, moving them to other pastures, taming the wild horses, and from time to time watering the herds, as well as doing other odd jobs.

At the end of the middle month of winter, father requested that I go with Damdinsüren on the way to the Amarbayasgalant lamasery<sup>1</sup> and take animal fat and meat to trade with the Chinese for flour and rice. One day I took a five-year old camel and loaded it up with fatty meat stuffs, edible fat, and sheep and goat meat and went with Damdinsüren to the Iven River. I met the Chinese farmer at Burgaldai and traded the meat, etc. for the flour and the rice, which we kept at Burgaldai and moved on to the Amarbayasgalant lamasery, where one's main wish was to bow before the stupa of the first Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu and wander around the temples.

On the way back, we picked up the flour and the rice and on the road to the Orkhon River we cut willow trees to make the ends of the *urgas* we would use later. I went on the road to the *ail* and peacefully drank tea before hurrying on, although the night was growing dark and a snow storm was brewing. Ultimately, I became lost in the mountains of Milchin and spent the night there. As the day brightened, I decided to wait near a mountain, which had a cluster of elm trees next to a gorge. Here my camel lay down, using the incline as a pillow. While lying down, the beast was suddenly startled, and all of its body trembled and its ears were thrust forward. With nostrils flaring, it jumped forward, just as I noticed wolves scratching at the earth. One was yelping and began to encircle us. It hit its nose and approached us, looking desperate. By lighting a match, I could see it scratching at the twigs and bark of the elm trees, and I was so terrified that my eyes clouded with tears and as I blinked to clear them, I saw these strange wolves moving noiselessly away.

My heart continued to beat furiously, and I trembled all night. When the dawn broke, I tried to get up but couldn't feel my feet below the ankles. Since I was unable to walk, I rode the camel and noticed the traces of the wolves' scratch marks made by clawing the ground after defecating. I saw where they had lain down, where some had sat on their hind legs, while others moved along in a line. From all of this, I figured there had been ten wolves in the pack. I decided to go to the Shavarta lamasery and asked a

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1. This monastery, together with the Gandan monastery in Ulaan Baatar and Erdene Zuu monastery in Kharkhorin, is considered one of the most important in Mongolia. Built in the eighteenth century by order of the Qing Emperor Yongzheng, it now has the mummified body of Zanabazar, the great first Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu.

poor lama in a cart where I could find shelter and decided to stop near a family settled in the so-called Yellow Spring. I went and helped them raise their house and prepare the ground for the next settlement, as well as helping them to set up the *khashaa*. The leader of this settlement, Sharav, gave me enough tea and food to satisfy me as I explained what had happened to me. My feet were sore with blisters that had frozen, so he made a solution of rhubarb to wash my feet and then wound white cotton around them. That evening the swelling in the areas which had been frozen decreased and for the next week, I watched the animals with the daughter of the family, and in the evenings, herded the cows into the *khashaa*. However, as night approached on the steppes, I worried that those strange wolves might appear again.

A few evenings later, our cart was going along the road, and we were greeted by lots of people, some of whom were angry because they had been looking for me for a whole week. When I explained what had happened to me, they stopped being annoyed, but I was sorry that I had delayed their work for a whole week. I recall a saying from my youth: "First you do something wrong, then you are sorry about it." This seemed to me a wise maxim of life. In time the expedition muddled along to father's *ger*, and I told my parents everything about what had happened to me, knowing how worried father must have been. I also asked people to pardon my mistakes and my carelessness as the night grew darker. Father became calmer, realizing I was not at fault.

Being an apprentice scribe under the jurisdiction of the banner office meant that some clerks worked in the capital's five Ministries, some of them trained in foreign languages in the capital, and some served the leaders at the *aimag* meetings and in the official matters of the banner office. There was a shortage of clerks so I had the chance to serve. Prince Bavaa and my parents thought that being a scribe would serve me well. So in the first month of spring, 1915, or the fifth year in the new calendar, I started my first State job as a scribe for a period of two months.

In the banner office, there were four positions for scribes, two of which were occupied by the sons of the nobility. These young men were spoiled, wrote their letters badly, and carried out many written announcements in a slapdash manner. Thus, another clerk, Gendenmijid, and I, night and day, worked together to correct their poor writing. Although I served as a scribe, I also acted as a servant to the spoiled children of the Prince and officials who couldn't write. There was, therefore, a double burden to bear in this service. Some of the officials at the banner office suffered with the scribes as they watched the "brats" of the high officials secretly granted titles and given support. They were not able to write very well, behaved with great arrogance, and hid behind the backs of those who didn't understand what was going on.

However, each day the clerk Gendenmijid and I had to send out urgent letters, and we tried as best we could to write quickly and efficiently, abridging—if necessary—overlong sentences without losing their content. It was the custom from ancient Manchu times that the announcements included all sorts of background and geographic information. Official orders from higher offices had to be copied exactly, except for adding the first and last sentences, which would display the names of the sender and the recipient because (1) this was the way the bureaucracy did things (2) this method avoided any personal responsibility and (3) this system helped disguise poor drafting ability. Though the work of the clerks was made very difficult and lots of paper was consumed, such work might be useful to historians in the future.

The clerks sent out the urgent letters in four-sided envelopes with pictures of horses' hooves in each corner and a bird with a letter in its beak, and they followed the regulations of the subsidiary relays to the *aimags*, banners, and *sums*. The relay rider accepted these documents without hesitation and hurried to send them, as was the custom. If these urgent documents were held up, fines were levied. A postman relay commander was appointed to each large base of the relay office, and he was accountable in all four directions from the Khuree capital. There was also an officer commander for each group of ten bases. At the relay office there were personal messengers carrying messages between the Manchus, under the pretext of appeasing the Mongolians. These messengers would set up a tight schedule, which left no time to sleep and eat. They used the best and swiftest horses to deliver these messages and were called the express delivery relay couriers. The Mongolian Autonomous Government continued to follow these strict rules. Although this express service was only to be used to send messages concerning affairs related to frontier matters between the five state ministries, other brutal ministers used it without authorization. The couriers had no rest during a 24 hour period. When the clerks delivered their documents or messages to the couriers, their first relay was customarily greeted with a gun salute. Seven to eight days before the courier was to arrive, a message was sent asking that the best horses be tethered and ready, although quite a few relay horses were in poor health. Minor ailments were ignored, causing the animals to suffer.

My term as scribe finished after two months, but because one scribe never reported for duty and two scribes who were the children of officials were set free, Gendenmijid was sent out as a regional military scribe, and I had to serve another two months as assistant scribe. Since this was my second term as an apprentice scribe, I wasn't as tired as I had been before and could do my own work as well as helping others. In this way, I was helped in getting my name on the list of future scribes.

Every four months, the banner office was supplied with two goats to be shared among the apprentice clerks along with other bits of food and drink. The teachers of the clerks were supplied with two goats but, in order to economize, saved one. Since I ate only one goat instead of two, I saved four goats, which I exchanged for money. Since one goat was worth two thick bricks of tea or one *tael* of silver, when I finished four months of my apprenticeship, I went home with eight bricks of tea, which would satisfy the tea drinking needs of my family for a year. I then began my journey home along three relays following the route I had taken with the subject "teacher." I did have a short rest near the stone *oboo* where I loosened the girth straps on my easy going horse since I remembered that the grooms complained that the scribes killed the horses by hurrying home.

The people who worked on the relay often had to secretly resist the most brutal attacks from the official messengers. To retaliate, the relay grooms gave these messengers the most troublesome horses, with the least comfortable saddling. On the last two relay stops on these three relays, people in certain areas were reluctant to give the riders good horses because they were short of animals and help. I was given a mother camel tethered to her young, a mare tied to her foal, or a stallion without a groom. Sometimes there were no grooms to return the animals to the settlements, and we were told that in such cases we had to follow a circular route, although each settlement did agree to provide some sort of horse or camel to ride, so I finally reached home after six days.

In the meantime, my parents had been so worried about me that they had sought out the well-known diviner Lama Tserendash who explained that there were two types of curses. A so-called black curse was people cursing you. A so-called white curse was when people envied you. The lama told my mother and father that I was the subject of a white curse and that to raise my spirit, incense and prayers of worship to the Mahakala<sup>2</sup> cult should be offered. While my parents did what the lama said, I returned home. Since the lama had helped them and they were no longer worried, they gave the lama two bricks of tea and a long ceremonial scarf.

At this time, however, there were diviners and lamas who had great influence here, and there were those who were skilled in exorcism but who often lied to the people, exploited them, and robbed them of their money. My mother and father were well and happy and felt lucky that they could turn to a good lama to cast out misfortune. Their honest lama was quite different from those who swindled the people who literally placed their faith in them and were, through ignorance, deluded by religion.

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2. An important figure in Tibetan Buddhism who, with his consort Kali, governs the universe. He is sometimes represented as an emanation of Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion.

Because I used any sort of mount for transport, people said this boy, son of Jamsrang, had grown into a man with a lot of patience. They said that I was a quiet, peaceful, modest, cautious, indestructible man with an upright character.

I then was arbitrarily assigned to the Chimed relay and sent to work for Bayarbat, son of Prince Bavaa. According to this order, one had to serve on the relay or in the military or civil service. By the Prince's decision, both rich and poor, irregardless of their condition, were forced to serve their allotted time, especially in the Khujirbulan and other regions of the capital where people were called up for a short period of education for military service. However, there were lots of arguments with Prince Bayarbat about this.

The quota of recruits for full time military service drew from the few young lay inhabitants of the towns and the capital. Since the majority of the young men were lamas, there weren't too many to call up and send off to the army. Many possible recruits were quite wealthy, and there were cunning methods used to escape military service. The poor people who came empty handed to the lamas were ransomed into the military service where they were sent to patrol the distant frontiers. Those who were the relatives of those called up and who stayed at home had no way of making a living because they were really servants to the princes. They were forced to work night and day to just get by, and those who were not able to work had to wander from *ger* to *ger* begging. Those who were near the lamasery asked for the garbage which the worshippers had discarded.

Actually the Autonomous Government of the Eighth State Emperor named Agvanluvcan made his close disciple, Badamdorj, the Minister of Internal Affairs and Prime Minister in Urga, and he handled matters in a rather half-hearted manner. Religious cases were the principal priority, and the second priority was issues of State. Since he was known for taking bribes, the crafty, rich secular and religious nobility were able to use him for their own advancement. Thus they became disciples of the Bogdo Khan<sup>3</sup> and benefited from their high positions and ranks. These disciples of the Bogdo Khan were privileged aristocrats who were completely free of the burden of service, while the poor became their servants, performing compulsory duties for them in each *aimag* or on the ecclesiastical estates. Foreign traders were paid with loans which demanded high rates of interest, resulting in huge debts which were heaped onto the backs of the poor.

In the summer of 1917, some low level civil servants, some princes, and some authorities in the four *aimags* met to discuss how this heavy burden could be more equally shared. Some felt that the responsibilities should be more equally distributed but many of the nobles, led by Prime Minister Badamdorj, opposed this plan. This group believed that the cronies of the Bogdo

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3. Or Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu.

Khan should only concern themselves with religious issues and should not be burdened with civil and military problems, including the relay. Thus they secretly reshaped the order of the Bogdo Khan so that the demands of the four Khalkha *aimags* were not met. This demonstration of favoritism forced the four Khalkha *aimags* to bear the burden of service alone as the decree was made known throughout the city and the countryside. Because of this dispute, the reputations of the religious feudal lords, led by the Prime Minister Badamdorj, declined among the secular nobility. In fact, because all matters connected with the Ministry of Badamdorj were not carefully scrutinized, great favoritism, bribery, and greed flourished. Arbitrarily, people were relieved of their posts, and convictions were imposed by the ministers of rank.

As this corruption and cruelty deepened, the roots of the existing Autonomous Government were weakened, and the problem of depending on outside States arose, leading to arguments among the lay and secular feudal lords about relying on the Russian monarchy. Some people wished to turn to America or Japan, and some had considered allying with China. Thus at this time the policy of military control of Mongolia by China resurfaced.

At this time, Lenin was the leader of the Russian people. He came from the working class<sup>4</sup> and was the founder of the Communist Party which overthrew the capitalist government in November, 1917. For the first time in history, he built a Soviet State based on the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the cruel landlords were expelled. Our Mongolian nation is adjacent to Russia and, historically, there were relations between the Mongolian and Russian peoples. Thus the victorious October Revolution provided fertile ground for those ideas to grow among the Mongolians. In a message sent to those in power in Mongolia, the government of the Soviet Union canceled the unfair agreements and the aggressive policies drawn up by the old Tsarist regime. The worker and peasant socialist government supported the establishment of an autonomous, free Mongolia in which the people were the real sovereigns after so many years of feudal oppression. In addition, the Soviet Union announced its desire to establish friendly relations with Mongolia, which was regarded as an equal. It stated further that other countries had no right to interfere in the internal affairs of Mongolia and that the representatives of the Red Army welcomed this Free Mongolia.

However, authorities in the Autonomous Mongolian Government were afraid of Soviet Russia and still maintained relations with the White Russians who were fighting the Bolsheviks. At the same time, the cruel and reactionary Chinese government, on the pretext of stopping the Soviet revolution, sent troops to Mongolia and attempted to take it over. After this, the Chinese representative to the Autonomous Government in the capital named Chen Yi voluntarily and secretly hatched a conspiracy agreement with sixty-four

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4. Lenin certainly did not derive from the working class. His parents were professionals and were highly sophisticated educators.

clauses, which aimed to destroy the Autonomous Government. This conspiracy was headed by Prime Minister Badamdorj, the feudal traitor.

At the end of the second month of 1919, the Japanese imperialists with Semenov, the fugitive leader of the White Russians, under the pretext of uniting the Mongolian nationalists—a group composed of the feudal nationalist sympathizers—some Inner Mongolians, Barga, and Buryats proclaimed their own government at one of the railway stations. But this was only a game with no foundation, and it soon collapsed. Then, after March 3, 1919, the Japanese hurriedly made an agreement with the Anfu group—a group in the Chinese government favorable to the Japanese—to invade Soviet Russia. In November of the same year, the Chinese general Xu Shuzheng and a number of soldiers attacked and occupied Mongolia, on the pretext of protecting it from Soviet Russia and in so doing, overthrew the Autonomous Government.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Badamdorj, the leader of the feudal traitors, offered a proposal to dissolve the whole government in the upper and lower *gers* of the parliament, but the upper *gers* opposed this plan, and the proposal was not accepted by the lower *gers*. Then Badamdorj became angry and used his authority to chastise the Parliament, saying that a few could not defeat the many, nor could the weak overpower the strong. He called for more serious suggestions. He offered to step down with his government and let the Chinese rule, and he then forced the Bogdo Khan to sign a decree abolishing the Autonomous Government. People were angry that the Chinese might rule Mongolia and that Badamdorj had sold his homeland for 100,000 silver coins.

At the same time, the five government ministries were abolished, and the Mongolian soldiers were being disarmed of their weapons. It was discussed everywhere that Silinboo, from the Ministry of Outer Mongolian Affairs Commission, would administer all of Mongolia and Silinboo's ministry dispatched papers which were not clearly understood.

Xu Shuzheng, the representative of the Anfu group that depended on Japan and the Guomindang<sup>5</sup> army in the capital, established a military dictatorship, and entrance into the capital from the countryside was forbidden. Only officials with permission from the Outer Mongolian Affairs Commission could go in and out freely. However, Mongolians in both the capital and the countryside were depressed that their nation was occupied, and a resistance movement arose among the people. The hatred and opposition among the Mongolian people grew more intense, resulting in public strife. The leaders of the Guomindang army held His Holiness Jebtsundamba and his religious lords under their control while they committed even more cruel atrocities. Thus the popular protest and opposition grew.

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5. The Party, of which Sun Yat-sen and later Chiang Kai-shek became the leaders.

# 8

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## How I Became a Family Man

My mother and father decided it was time for their son to marry and near the western part of the estate of the Jebtsundamba lived the "subject" herder Batsuur Sodnomdorj with his 16 year old unmarried daughter, Nyambadrakh. Our parents secretly arranged our marriage, and both sides went to the Khadan monastery where there was a certain astrologer named Dash who had the means to tell horoscopes. As a betrothal gift to the bride's family, my father secretly gave Sodnomdorj a five year old camel gelding, some horses, and some sheep. I noticed, while looking after the herds, that a camel, some horses, and a few sheep had disappeared and asked my parents about this. They answered that because times were not peaceful now, a lot of people were driving their herds to the capital to trade. Since they couldn't get what they wanted, they gave their herds to Sodnomdorj to exchange for furniture for their *ger*, clothes, etc. In addition, father had secretly ordered a four-walled *ger* from Damdindorj as well as all the *ger* furniture. Only later on did I learn about all of this!

One day my father said that because the autumn was turning cool we needed to move the herds where there would be plenty of water. So we settled down near the family of Sodnomdorj, moving near the so-called white mouth settlement with its water wells. While there, my parents started accumulating *airagh*, cheese, and cream from our neighbors. At the same time, father bought the *ger* that Damdindorj had built and put it up on the left side of the tent that he was preparing for me. Since there was a new *ger*, father said we would have a celebration. The *ger* was prepared with all the new furniture inside, but, I wondered, where were the bedclothes?

On the next day, Sodnomdorj held a celebration at his *ger* to which mother, father, and I were invited. We all wore new *deels* and carried long

white scarves wrapped around our arms. Sodnomdorj treated us with great respect, announcing shortly that it was time for the bride and groom to meet and pay their respects to the fire god. When I heard this, I was both frightened and embarrassed. In fact, I was so flustered that I could hardly sit down. Outside the *ger*, two women entered from the bride's cloth tent, escorting the bride whose face was covered with white crepe. I knelt down, and then we sat together. We put oil on the fire and lit the flames of the lamp in front of Buddha, and we both prayed in front of the flame before she was taken outside.

After many people had assembled and enjoyed themselves, some left and some, by invitation, went to my father's or my *ger* where some guests spent the night in preparation for the next day's ceremonies. At dawn the next morning when the sun touched the mountain, the elders arrived on horseback. I appeared near Sodnomdoj's *ger* with a quiver full of bows and arrows tied across my shoulders. The two women dismounted and went toward the door of the *ger* and took the bride out, one on each side supporting her. They covered her face with white crepe and put her on a gentle horse with new silver equipment and a beautiful bridle and saddle. A man rode pillion behind her as they slowly moved toward our *ger*.

Some of the people in my party went ahead of me to my *ger* and returned to escort the bride. They helped her dismount and alight onto the white felt in front of the *ger*. There were two women, the older one was named Tsevel and the other was called Zalmaa. They supported her, one on each side, and led her into the *ger*. They then removed the white crepe covering her face and told her to put oil into the lamp in front of my parents' Buddha. She placed both oil and incense there, and then the women threw clarified butter onto the fire so that it flared up. The prayer ceremony was conducted in this way. The bride was weeping quietly probably because she was afraid or embarrassed. My father then invited everybody to the wedding feast for his son and daughter-in-law in the great *ger*, and everyone devoted themselves to having fun while the bride brought out all the elegant, bright-colored, spiral patterned bedding and bed, as well as the elegant wool/cotton tower cover for the new cradle for our future children.

The guests gathered in the large *ger* for the wedding feast and on finishing, they went to the small *ger* where the bride held the door out of respect for mother, father, and the elders who entered first, and a length of felt was spread in front of the small *ger*. The oldest occupied the first places, and others sat near the felt door until there was no space left. Preparations for the wedding feast in the new *ger* were devoted to boiling a whole sheep for the assembled guests to enjoy. The guests and relatives said that the bride and groom must eat the head and the back and leave the rest for the guests. People shared the food, and there was much noise from the wedding songs while everyone was eating. There was *airagh* and vodka and snacks in the

new *ger*. The guests thanked the groom and bride, wished them good luck, and gave them the customary short ceremonial scarf and some silver. Then they left happily.

But the two older women remained in my *ger* with my wife Nyambadrakh and me, going in and out and continually watching and serving us. In their free time, the two women instructed us as part of the ancient ritual of marriage. Our mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, and relatives all agreed that this was how to make a marriage and that our ceremony had been carried out perfectly.

Now there was no need to be shy and anxious with each other. With true hearts and sincere partners, life would be happy. We would worry together and show compassion for each other when we failed and support each other from the time we awoke to when we went to sleep. They told us that we would always cherish each other and take turns doing what was needed. In this way, three days passed for all four of us eating and sleeping in the same *ger*. On the fourth day, the two women said to each other, as we listened unsuspected, that we were still shy and aloof and hadn't become accustomed to each other. The women also mentioned that they needed to return to their own homes to get more clothes, so we whispered to each other that they would never leave if we didn't start talking. If we no longer felt embarrassed, worked together as a family, and laughed and enjoyed ourselves, then the women would return home immediately.

The next day we talked like husband and wife, trying not to look embarrassed as we joined in the work inside the *ger* and began learning about all sorts of situations that arise in married life. The two women were pleased and showed their approval of us when meeting mother and father. Now that marriage was more familiar to us, we didn't need any supervision in organizing our home, and our parents agreed that we were successful. We went to the little *ger* to visit the bride's family for a ceremony of tea, *airagh*, yogurt, and snacks, and the two ladies were each given a cotton *deel*, brick tea, and a ceremonial scarf. We were made to share a cup of yogurt to symbolize well-being and a continual wealth of food, and they then stretched out a long ceremonial scarf on our palms. The two women wished us a happy married life and commanded us to look after our parents. We both bid them farewell and sent them off from our home, wishing them a long life of peace and happiness.

At this time, it was customary that the new bride always be respectful of her in-laws and every time they came to her *ger*, she wore a hat and a *deel* with the cuffs turned up and greeted them with a banquet and a quilted mat spread out with tea and the choicest food. But it was taboo for the bride to drink vodka or to smoke since she had to be modest, clean, and correct before her elders. So in this way, my father and mother helped us set up our new household.

# 9

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## Setting Out by Horseback Armed against the Occupier

The rise of the Russian nation in the October Socialist Revolution smashed to pieces and scattered the Whites here and there. In October, 1920, one group which ultimately expelled the Guomindang soldiers from the capital, under the instigation of Japan, penetrated into Sechen Khan *aimag* on the northern side of Mongolia with the help of his Holiness the Jetsundamba Khutukhtu and the secular feudal lords and chased them in the direction of Khyagt and Altanbulag. In January, 1921, under the false pretext of unifying the Mongolian nation, they took over the capital and created a new threat, subduing the many people occupying the capital and taking their herds and property.

At this time, the Mongolian Peoples' Party was formed under the revolutionary leadership of Sükhbaatar.<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Russian government was compassionate like a generous older brother who offered to lead us with the help of the eternal teachings of Lenin, which Sükhbaatar had studied in Irkutsk and incorporated into his own ideology. Earlier the Soviet government had repeatedly offered warm support and advice to the Mongolian people, which was concealed by the Jebtsundamba and the lay and secular feudal lords as they tried to suppress the struggles of the people, but later it was quite clear what they both were doing.

The Mongolian revolutionaries, under the leadership of D. Sükhbaatar and Kh. Choibalsan,<sup>2</sup> went to the northern frontier to meet the guards of the northern posts. They talked to them about the cruel policies of the White soldiers, who were the real enemy of the people, and encouraged

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1. Often referred to as the "Lenin" of Mongolia.

2. Actually Choibalsan was not an important leader at this stage.



**Figure 9.1. Statue of Sükhaataar, founder of the Communist State in Mongolia, in Sükhaataar Square.**

them to enlist in the military. In March, 1921 the first Congress of the Revolutionary Party was held at Ded Shiveen on the Russian-Mongolian border, and the Mongolians approved the ten aims of the Party and drew up the Party program. The Central Committee of the Party was chosen. With all these events going on inside Mongolia, the lay and secular feudal lords were afraid and tried to keep everything hidden from the people.

Thus the unity of the Red Army and the farmers and workers of Soviet Russia helped in the struggle against the White fugitive leader bandit Ungern.<sup>3</sup> Well unified and organized, they joined forces with the Mongolian Peoples' Partisan Volunteer Army and helped our thousands of people as a brother would a sister.

At this time, the people aimed their sharp-pointed weapons at the Guomindang, trying to expel them. Thus at the beginning of March, 1921 my banner office ordered me to move to the northern edge of the *khoshuu* together with the local people called the Sanjaa Hurel and the Yanjiv and spy on the Guomindang's soldiers. I was forced to collect clear information

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3. This is Ungern von Sternberg, a bizarre Russian commander who occupied the capital city of Urga for part of 1921, before being expelled by Soviet and Mongolian troops in July of that year.

about them and take the news to the banner office. The people in this same *khoshuu* gave male camel mounts but had no guns or weapons to hold in their hands, only clubs. News reports had to come from the border, and I had to work patrolling by turn, day and night. This was a difficult task but since it came from a higher authority I had to go to the northern *khoshuus* of Princes Sechen and Zorig to meet with the local people and collect information about the Guomindang's soldiers. I then received the news that some of the Guomindang's forces had been attacked by the Mongolian soldiers near the red cliffs. While this was happening, I informed my banner that they were retreating to the area of "Tsakhir Mors" in Prince Zorig's *khoshuu* and that they were plundering the local people. People had assembled near a mountain ridge in an effort to protect themselves and their land and possessions, and the young idlers patrolled on horseback using clubs and guns and holding a wind flag. As this was happening, the previous Chinese Guomindang soldiers came to Sechen Van banner from the left under the Daransag Mountain passing through another area of Cho'on Banner, and three people working in Sanjaa and Hurel fled without giving any information.

I only had a camel for my mount, and I was isolated and left alone with no support. I was temporarily at my wits' end and hesitated. The sergeant of the Chinese soldiers was engaged in a defensive battle with Badrakhan from the army of Tüsheet Khan *aimag*. I joined the army of Badrakhan and was given a gun and a horse. With this combined strength, there was a full day's battle against the Chinese soldiers at Wolf Pass. Meanwhile, more Chinese soldiers arrived, and some of them turned to the east and west so that by evening, it seemed that our military detachment had been surrounded. Then Prince Badrakhan ordered the troops to hide themselves and spend the night higher up in the mountains, and three soldiers were sent to report to our main forces about the movements of the Guomindang. Meanwhile the Chinese soldiers who had been forming columns during the night disappeared to the south, and the remaining five to ten Chinese followed them.

But the large group of Chinese soldiers fled south in the dark of night. And, in fact, five to ten soldiers scattered to the north, where they stole people's goods and chattels but were defeated by the Mongolian soldiers. Their weapons were destroyed, and their horses were captured. We spent a few days in the North surviving on the food captured from the Chinese when four units of soldiers led by Lord Baljinnyam came with an order to control and arrive at a place called Tengleg, destroying the Chinese soldiers on the way. The Ministry appointed commanders Zangi, Bold, the Oirat named Sonom, Taij Badrakh and Zangi Galsan to lead these four military units. A gelding mount was prepared for me since I was appointed scribe to the military. The Ministry in Tengleg appointed four men to lead the military units. Each created his own internal administration and mobilized his

own troops. Having commandeered the peoples' horses, they made their way south. At this time, Prince Baljinyam led the four units on a march to the south to go to the territory of the Tüsheet Prince and arrived in a place called Delkhonjil, from where the Prince reconnoitered to investigate the armed Chinese soldiers.

One week later men sent to the Prince came back with the news of these Chinese. Along the road, many local people had had their lives broken and their goods and chattels stolen or destroyed by the Chinese who by now had already crossed the frontier. In due course, Baljinyam and his four regiments of soldiers turned around to travel to the Tuul River; they temporarily stopped in the southwest in the Ulukh corner. A list was made of the Chinese property, and bulls as well as short and stumpy tailed horses were taken and delivered to the capital.

At this time, the affairs of the Mongolian military were supervised by the traitors, Chahar Prince Bayar and Prince Togtokh, who were led through the internal intrigues of the feudal lords by an agent of the White Jambalan, a servant of Baron Ungern. Using the Bogdo Khan's name, they caused much suffering and cruelly plundered and executed people. This was known to our military through the official documents. On the other hand, the Red Army of Soviet Russia liberated our workers and peasants, and their cavalry cleansed the White robbers who—so they say—had destroyed our land. The Soviet army paid attention to the sufferings of the local people whose exhaustion had been ignored. This was most evident in the countryside where the so-called gentle horse song is sung in our country.

According to the Emperor's decree, Prince Baljinyam was supposed to take four regiments promptly to Sulinher to protect the southern frontier. The units in our regiment, when they received the order, immediately took the opportunity to prepare the horses for about a week of travel to Sulinher. Provisions needed for the journey were captured and looted along the way so the monks of Olgii monastery, in the Zadgait area of worship, and the Zavdarin monastery, with its cruel head lama, contacted each other in an effort to find ways to protect their property from the looting soldiers, bribing and flattering them with fruit, money, and the "khadagh" or sacred scarf. Prince Baljinyam gave orders to the regiment commanders to refrain from taking the property of the lamas who were praying for the protection of the peace and well-being of the public. Although the military commanders knew of the conspiracy between the monks and the Prince, they quietly went about their business. Along the way Prince Baljinyam drew up extraordinary agreements to leave the lamas alone, while the charitable lamas blessed the soldiers. Order and calm had to be maintained by following military rules. All plots and open resistance had to be suppressed and punished to preserve order.

My work as a scribe for the military unit was minimal, but there was much to do for Prince Baljinyam regarding the documentation of weapons. Therefore I was appointed to work in his office for a few months. Meanwhile I sent letters to the Ministry about going home, but my letters were ignored. In the meantime, according to the official news, Baron Ungern's army was defeated by the Russian and Mongolian soldiers. Before very long, there would be a popular revolution in the military class, and the Soviet Red Army would join forces shoulder to shoulder with the Mongolians to eliminate the enemy and pacify the area.

On July 8th, 1921 in the capital city, the King of Autonomous Mongolia, the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, was reinstated on the Emperor's throne. News reached the Ministry that the Peoples' Government had been proclaimed, and now it was feared that the White robbers or renegades would flee via Hailar and Harbin city, causing more confusion. Thus it was necessary to be vigilant, spy on these robbers, sever their roots, and destroy them wherever they were discovered. Following this assignment, the director of the four regiments sent an order to the settlements to attack. The military units took turns spying and heard about the route that the White fugitives were following to Zamyn Üüd. Upon getting this information, Prince Badrakh and fifty of the best soldiers went on the attack with weapons. However, the White soldiers left behind families of women, children, and old people who had their own horses and camels and who, trying to follow in the path of the Whites, went on to Harbin, where they were closely examined because they provided detailed reports to the Ministry before returning home. After this, there was no suspicious news, and all was peaceful and quiet for a few months. I have previously told my personal reasons for freeing myself from military duty, but this leave was postponed. Prince Baljinyam's request, however, was granted, and he was able to leave the military. Prince Damdin from the Tüsheet banner was appointed to succeed him.

I took advantage of this change in leadership and asked Prince Damdin if I could have a leave from the military. Since the situation was peaceful and there was less pressure on the people, I was freed from military service. It was accepted that I would use the relay in the direction of the capital to go home. I would pass through several relay points on the steppe in the first month of autumn and on into the winter and would ride any available horse to my native home.

My parents were happy, and there was endless rejoicing because I had returned from the distant frontier and was out of military service. In addition, the neighbors were relieved that the enemy had been destroyed and that they could live in peace. Rumors were spread from the cruel head lamas that terrible times were coming because of the growing power of the People's Party, and it was alleged that the new recruits took oaths to kill

their own the parents. My parents took into account that I had just returned from military duty and needed rest, so they wanted to free me from the daily tasks of taking care of the animals. Though I was not happy that I had had to endure military duty, I knew I couldn't shy away from helping my parents with the herding and other tasks. One day, my "teacher," Prince Chimeddavaa, sent an order which stated that because the manpower in his household was scarce, I had to spend the winter with him. As winter approached, he repaid an act of kindness with kindness and sent me the official papers which said that I was to spend the winter with him. Once again, Prince Chimeddavaa was up to his old tricks of trying to make me his servant.

While I was trying to decide what to do with Chimeddavaa's order, the Mongolian Peoples' Party and the government publicly announced that the rights of the religious and secular (yellow and black) feudal lords who had abused the people by taking their property would be curtailed, and in the future it would be forbidden to enserf the people. Encouraged by the admirable work of the Peoples' Party and the government, I sent a note to my "teacher" with someone going in his direction that I was sick and couldn't travel and thus spent the winter helping my parents.

The Peoples' Government made the decision on January 25, 1922 to abolish the serfdom enjoyed by the religious and secular feudal lords, to change the situation of subordinates who would become State subjects, and to abolish the ranks of the feudal officials. However, some progressive feudal officials and monks who had nationalistic views and favored freedom of movement against foreign enemies were temporarily included in implementing these policies and that is why the Sechen, Zorig, and Tüsheet *khoshuus* spoke of bending the junction of the banner lines where a special southern, trusted, honored, tall, and thin wise man lived. Seventy families were informally put under the control of this much admired lama who was followed by many for his wisdom, and was an honorary representative, who was used under false pretenses to introduce and implement government policies.

In March, 1922, at a joint meeting of the local labor administration, the decision was made to give me the position of scribe, which I shared with another person, and some days I was the servant to the officials.

# 10

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## The Road to Educating the People through the Party

One day the so-called Japanese Danzan,<sup>1</sup> leader of the Central Committee of the People's Party, and the meeren<sup>2</sup> Dorj both arrived at the banner office to organize the Party, the cell, and the propaganda and to carry out meetings to enlist new members. The banner office met, and Gendenmijid, Galdandorj, Chimed, and I were the scribes who, along with the Princes Choisrondorj, Devidorj, and Duke Olzinorov, all became members of the Party. Since all of these men wanted to join the Party, they were considered real Party members. We received the certificates from Danzan, the leader of the Central Committee of the People's Party, with the words that the People's Party was a miracle. Then we held our first meeting, elected the secretary and the vice deputies of the Party cell, and determined that the next Party meeting would be in June, 1922.

At the meeting, the discipline of Party members and decisions about how the official tour of duty would be carried out were discussed. Then the leader of the Party Central Committee, Danzan, explained to us that the feudal lords and high lamas would no longer exploit the people and if they did so, the cell could convene, investigate, and discuss these issues to find the truth and then inform the Central Committee. After this, Danzan left Urga, passing by different relay stations.

After him, the banner official, my "teacher" Prince Chimeddavaa, called me to his office and offered the proverb: "Do not cry till you are out of the woods" or to put it another way: "Laugh before breakfast and you will cry before supper" (or "Don't count your chickens before they hatch") all of

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1. Named "Japana" Danzan because he visited Japan in 1916, later became Minister of Finance, and later still Mongolia's representative to Moscow.

2. A rank in the Manchu administration of banners.

which meant "why would you enter this People's Party? This Party requires you to take an oath to kill your parents and your teacher lamas." But I really didn't get that scared because even if those high officials could get upset, they no longer had the authority or the right to arrest, interrogate, or wrongfully accuse.

The banner office assembled a few days later for a meeting and decided the next meeting would be July 1, 1922 when the Party cell would also meet. Each Party member from each individual area had no mark of distinction as they all assembled and they agreed before going home that when they returned they would wear a simple *deel* and a felt or woven reed hat to distinguish themselves as Party members. At this time, the People's Government abolished the feudal hierarchy, and a rumor spread among the people that the local administrative units would change, so the spirit of the general public revived and the reputation of the Party members made them stand out from the people. Then the Party published a widely available declaration for the people. On the day previously agreed on, high and low ranking people and scribes came, via the relay, to meet on this specific day.

The Party members seized the opportunity of the meeting to assemble while at the second meeting the matter of the corvée was examined, and the feudal minister and the leader of this service, Gunsenchogdov, was summoned with his documents. He was criticized, and it was decided that he had to reveal his documents, which were wrapped up in yellow silk. Gunsenchogdov, himself, was all decked out in a hat with a peacock feather as a symbol of rank and a short black velvet jacket worn over his long gown, and he looked as if he was worried. The Party asked Mr. Gunsenchogdov how many cases he already had judged and how many awaited judgment. The Party committee said he needed to give exact numbers of all cases and that he had to be very specific. He was very scared, and his voice trembled as the Party members scolded and criticized him, saying that in the future he should make decisions quickly, based on justice. He also had to follow all requirements they set and then he was sent off.

At the dawn of the second meeting, Dorj, Gochoo, and five others, who made up the probationary Party members or deputies assembled, and the Party members criticized Prince Choisrondorj for hiding rifles and conspiring with the feudal lords, and he was expelled from the Party. This information was sent on to the Central Committee of the People's Party, and the next cell meeting was planned for the winter to discuss reforming the local administration. Then the meeting was adjourned. Some of the work of the Party members at the meeting was individual written work, and then people went home to their own area.

Every day I worked at my own private animal husbandry, though I was subject to the son of Prince Chimeddavaa and was summoned during the summer to the *taij* of the first rank, Bayarbat, to work taming the wild mare

and tending to her foal and her milk—all without pay. My body then said that I will not work for you like a horse and a dog, and you cannot scare me since you don't understand that the People's Party and Government have changed all this. By summoning me, you have gone against the laws which the Party has issued, and you will be subject to the punishments, especially since you are so arrogant. Bayarbat spoke angrily as a person of authority who wore the hat with the coral button of rank which, he thought, made him above rank. He stated that he couldn't wear his hat and be insulted, so he threw it in my lap trying to intimidate me by saying he would tell all of this to the banner office, which would punish me severely. And off he galloped bare headed without his fancy hat. Since they were worried, I sent his hat with the tassel to him through this local "yellow" man Naidar.

Nearby people worried because I, the scribe and the son of Jamsrang who limped, was believed to be the steadiest and most remarkable person. However, it now seemed that I was actually a scoundrel who had laughed at the Prince's rank and confiscated his hat with the tassel, which led them to worry that they would be called as witnesses to this grave crime. After that, the assistant to the Banner Prince Tsedevsüren, Prince of the sixth rank Chimeddavaa, banner officer Dendev, the feudal leader, and other sycophants sucking up to the feudal lords began to dislike me. Although they really hated me, they understood they no longer had the power to arrest and punish me, so all they had left was increasing hatred toward me, which became stronger every day.

Thus in 1922 the autumn season ended, and the winter season began with a very strong snow storm which resulted in a serious "zud."<sup>3</sup> Our herds were left to die during the "zud" although not one scrap of skin was wasted, and in the spring we were able to begin to transport them to the Chinese Red Hill market and travel to do business for rice and flour. So off I went to transport the skins with Dorjsamba and Chimedolgor, and all three of us together, in the daylight, traveled with four loaded camels and carts for a time, and then stopped to camp at a Chinese farm trading post where rice and flour were exchanged for the skins, and each camel was fully, if loosely, loaded. We bought a very skinny brown horse and went to the Chinese trading post to buy half a sack of Chinese green peas. We filled a bowl to capacity with peas soaked in warm water, which was food for the skinny brown horse. When given to the horse daily, he revived and became stronger and put on flesh so we could use the horse to pull the cart and to go visiting from tent to tent. Thus, loading the rice and the flour on some of the camels and leveling the load on the weak horses and camels, we traveled for a month, and I came back to my home area.

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3. Catastrophic amounts of snow and ice and extraordinary cold temperatures, which often led to the deaths of many animals.

I brought all the flour and the rice from far away, however some of the camels were exhausted and could not be revived and died. In addition, because of the "zud" only one cow lived, half the horses died, and the profits from the livestock were not enough to feed my family and my parents. On the other hand, there was strong resentment against me, the Party man—"that guy"—and I was called names. They smeared me and tried to provoke me and even though my behavior had changed, I was making no profit and, in fact, my situation had worsened.

After long deliberations, I decided to go to the capital and take a job as a scribe or something suitable to help my mother and father. I asked them for permission, and they didn't refuse, but asked me not to sit behind a desk for too long. The Sharkov relay was being established, so lama Gunga and others went to the capital, and I went along with them and helped them along the way and arrived in the first month of summer, 1923 at the courtyard of the Tüsheet khan *aimag* and in the royal Tüsheet Banner's courtyard, which was guarded by an old man sitting there—a Mr. Baldan, and I moved in with him. One day I visited the Finance Ministry and talked to meeren Dorj and filed an application for work as a scribe. I had to take a writing test which consisted of copying four documents, with no mistakes, which would go to the leaders of four *aimags* and which had to be finished by evening. So Dorj gave me the originals and the four red-lined paper copies, and Dorj told me he would tell me tomorrow. These letters were addressed to the leaders of the four *aimags*. I had written with great attention and very carefully and had barely managed to finish by 6 o'clock. When meeren Dorj returned, I handed him all four copies and awaited his response.

The next day an order came to go immediately to the Ministry of Finance, and I arrived there, and an official, unknown to me, told me that I had been given a half time position as a clerk, and that every month I would receive six *taels* of silver as a half time scribe in the Ministry. From the first of the next month, I began as a full scribe in the department, and my real salary became twelve *taels* a month. I became more active with each passing day, hour, and minute and worked as hard as I could every day for six hours a day mastering the Chinese abacus and doing calculations in four ways. After two months of genuine scribal work, the Finance Ministry decided to transfer me to the third rank of the accounting department, where I worked as a scribe doing the accounts. According to that decision, I made financial documents of credit and debit, i.e. who owed what—and made monthly and quarterly summaries. After working three months, I asked the Ministry of Finance to let me return home to my parents, but I was ignored. However, I was told I could take a short vacation but had to return. With half my salary, I bought what I needed to help my parents, and I brought my wife, Nyambadrakh, to the capital for good, and I moved all my property there as well. I returned from home in the stipulated time.

I was raised to a second rank accountant doing scribal work for the Finance Ministry. As an accountant of the second rank, I worked for many ministries, inspecting how they managed their expenditures and budgets, and eventually I managed accounts payable and receivable. I did such work for three months and gained experience. In the meantime, both of us were living in old man Baldan's home, which was not very comfortable for either party, and we worried that we were abusing his hospitality by imposing on him. So, we went to different markets and bought any furniture we could find. We managed to buy a small four wall *ger* with a single cover, and we furnished it so we had our own home. However, the winter cold was getting to us, and we didn't have sufficient fuel to burn. We barely survived the winter.

Since the first day that I started working as a scribe in the Finance Ministry after being transferred to the capital, I registered myself in the tenth Party cell in the Ministry of Military Affairs, and I attended the meetings with the strong Magsarjav, Tsevenjamsranov, Choibalsan, Sechen Khan Navanneren, Rinchino, and Jadambaa, etc., all of whom were high ranking officials. All of the discussions were based on striving for these ten goals: (1) widening and strengthening Party ranks; (2) further improving inner Party discipline; (3) spreading the ideology of the Party; (4) promoting culture and educating the people; (5) establishing and developing modern medical practices; (6) making people healthy; (7) equalizing taxes and freeing the poor from taxation; (8) enabling the people to control the power of the state; (9) expelling the greedy foreign traders; (10) and putting in their place joint stock co-operatives. All the points on this list should have been discussed, and once this directive was approved by the Party, Bayar, the secretary of the cell, should distribute the list to all cell members, and all should follow a special plan to implement these goals.

By the beginning of 1924, the Finance Ministry decided that I would be promoted to the rank of head scribe-book keeper, and I would work with Mijid and Tumen on the joint budgets of all the different ministries for six months, after which the Ministry decided to raise me to third rank book keeper to work on the national budget and its expenditures.

It was reported on April 17, 1924 that the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu had died, and the news of his death spread quickly. People who looked like pilgrims and many different monks led by Hamba, the Abbot of the Gandan Lamasery, and Tsorj, the monk who presided over the scholastic seminaries, proceeded in a constant flow to the palace of the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu. We, the civil servants, the responsible officials of the Party, and members of the union had to pay attention to our work. Kh. Choibalsan<sup>4</sup> was appointed leader by a special commission of the People's Government to conduct and

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4. Later the Head of State and Secretary of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) or the Communist Party.

register all the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu's property, which was considered in three parts: one part was allocated for religious matters while the other two were transferred to the control of the State, with one part of this going to popular education and the other part devoted to health care. The people were happy and approved of this arrangement that rightfully distributed the wealth, but the religious feudal lords attacked the poor people and said that because of their bad karma the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu had died and gone to heaven. They tried to challenge the decisions of the government and confuse the people by telling them to donate their wealth to the monasteries for prayers because only in so doing could the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu be reborn. The death of the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu offered the government a good opportunity to implement its program step by step.

I fulfilled my duties as a third rank accountant to the Minister so the Finance Ministry permitted me to take a leave to go and visit my mother and father in the countryside. They were soothed by my visit and during my days with them, the secular feudal lords and their followers suddenly acted completely differently and treated me as if I was a person of importance and knowledge, sucking up to me and feigning respect. Whenever we met, they appeared to compromise, but all of us who knew them saw their hypocrisy. On the other hand, for the local people, the People's Revolution and the Government promoted a contented way of life, and it was clear that a harmonious life led to an enthusiasm for work and more prosperity.

Returning to the Finance Ministry after learning about the local situation, I was eager to finish my work when suddenly in the summer Bogd Khan mountain *aimag* had a Small Khural<sup>5</sup> and selected me as a delegate and gave me a pass to the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) Third Great Khural. After the beginning of August, the Third Great Khural of the MPRP met. The meeting produced a very important declaration which stressed both the strong independence of the whole country and the friendship between the Mongolian and the Soviet people, who were like brothers and sisters and would not deviate from but would strengthen their bond. The important decision was made not to follow the capitalist path, and both the Party and the Government opposed dealing with Danzan and Bavaasan and bringing to light their betrayal of the Party and the Government.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the activists of the Revolutionary Youth League played a major role in exposing and arresting the traitors.

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5. An assemblage or Parliament.

6. Danzan (1873–1924) was Secretary of the Central Committee of the MPRP and Commander-in-Chief of the army when he was accused of anti-Soviet and capitalist policies. He was executed on August 30, 1924. A distinction must be made between him and Japan Danzan. See Note 1. Bavaasan (1899–1924) was Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Youth League and was accused of similar "crimes." He was executed on the same day as Danzan.

Nationwide there were State democratic elections and following the People's desires they resulted in the First National Great Khural meeting on November 8, 1924, which proclaimed the power of the people, and the first constitution was approved. By this constitution, religious and political matters were separated, and people could hold their beliefs voluntarily. It was urgent to stop the use of torture, which existed in Manchu times, and to implement and follow new revolutionary laws. The Minister of Justice, Beis Sodnomdarjaa,<sup>7</sup> was removed and chastised, and when the Great Khural was not in session, the power would be given to the newly appointed leaders of the Small Khural.

At the previous Great Khural, the Party had made the decision to fulfill the goal of weeding out from the Party ranks those who had infiltrated the democracy and were not of the right class. Strict discipline was implemented, and a plan was drawn up regarding Party rules and program, and by the beginning of September, 1925 the Fourth Great Khural met and all guidelines were approved. From this Great Khural, in view of the increasing numbers of Party members, it was important to address key issues and make appropriate and timely decisions to strengthen the organization, the consolidation, and the ideology of the Party. It also stressed answering important questions and reaching clear decisions on such timely issues which were true to the ideas of proletarian internationalism, waging a resolute fight against all nationalistic ideas, promoting the economy of Mongolia, and forcing the elimination of exploitative foreign traders.

At this time I continued my accounting work in the Ulaan Baatar<sup>8</sup> administration, and there was another round of elections for local Ulaan Baatar officials. I was appointed to work as the leader of the second *khoro*.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, every day from 6 o'clock, I worked for six hours on the accounts in the Finance Ministry, and I was appointed as second ward chairman. So after spending six hours as an accountant at the Finance Ministry, I tried to have people maintain hygiene, and since I was appointed to ward head of a ten *ger* community I was responsible for monitoring the public order and hygiene, including garbage collection. Unless I checked on these *gers* from time to time, hygiene was not maintained and dirt and filth accumulated.

However, there was a little drinking of wine and spirits in the community which rarely led to brawls, but such loose behavior often led to quarrels and fights over property. Dealing with this required much time and labor. Much time and labor were also required within the wards collecting and registering, each quarter, the taxation on buildings where foreigners lived, as well as taxes on the animal pens or sheds and on animals like pigs and chickens. I reported to the Finance Ministry that it was difficult to do two

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7. Also known as Belegiin Sodnomdash. He attended the first Party meetings.

8. New name for the old capital city of Urga. Ulaan Baatar means "Red Hero."

9. The administrative unit in urban areas below *khot* or city or town.

jobs, and I asked the Finance Minister to let me give up accounting and let me have only the job as head of the second ward. The Finance Ministry approved my case and appointed Dorj community head instead of me. I handed him all my documents pertaining to my old job, and I returned to the Finance Ministry as an accountant.

After this event at the Finance Ministry, I was raised to second rank accountant official checking the public budget of many ministries, allocating funds to various ministries, monitoring the transfer of funds into appropriate accounts, and giving accountant scribes instructions and support. I worked there until June, 1926 when the head of the Ministry made me the leading accountant in charge of State receipts and expenditures, and I worked on the annual budgets for many ministries and five *aimags*. I traveled twice a year with a representative from the economic council to the *aimag* centers to check all the accounts.

At this time, the Japanese imperialists tried to exploit the Chinese military and seriously considered attacking and occupying Mongolia. China, England, America, and Germany—the capitalist countries—were “nesting” in Mongolia, and the influence of the secular feudal lords was quite widespread, causing serious obstacles to the progress of the Revolution. At the end of September, 1926 the MPRP held its Fifth Great Khural. At this Khural, it was clear that the People’s Revolutionary State had been strengthened, People’s political activities had been actively promoted, their way of life had been freed from the influence of the feudal lords and the wealthy, and their livelihoods had improved. Still the taxation policies had to be reconsidered, and traders had to be squeezed out. The Soviet Union had a treaty of mutual assistance with Mongolia on political and economic issues and within our own country co-operatives needed to be strengthened, and profiteers, imperialists, and feudal lords who were resisting the Revolution needed to be restrained.

After this, the Party turned to the Sixth Great Khural in November, 1927. Inside the Party at this meeting the Western tendency for rationality was not exposed and furthermore the leading groups on the Party’s Central Committee managed to gloss over Western tendencies. At this meeting of the Great Khural, feudal customs and the vicious influence of religion were seen as obstacles and were criticized by representatives who wished to eliminate them, strengthen and protect the country, build up inner unity and the People’s mass culture, decisively raise the standard of living, and show, without hesitation, a serious fight against the exploiting class.

But after the Sixth Great Khural, the Right Deviationists inside the Party tried to cause a rift in Mongolia’s friendly relationship with the Soviet Union. Many Right Deviationists also tried to form connections with the reactionary foreign capitalists and weaken the fight against the religious and secular feudal lords by supporting the new capitalist elements. Finally, they tried to reject and hinder honest criticism inside the Party.

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## Carrying Out the Responsibility of Trust

As lead scribe, I was transferred from the Tenth Party cell of the Military Ministry to the Ulaan Baatar Third Party cell. At this time inside the city, the number of Chinese, Mongolians, Tibetans, and exploitative speculators had increased in number and the elderly, comfortable, and rich people rented out buildings and accumulated wages and conspired with the speculative traders to amass new capital. The Party members and union activists were disgusted with all of this, and our Party cell discussed a resolution to limit this oppression. During the first and second inspection periods, the feudal lords who were dismissed from their jobs continually moved from one place to another and tried to sneak into various positions. Apart from this, our Party's relationship with the Comintern<sup>1</sup> weakened, and our representative at the most recent meeting was only considered a guest. The Comintern Executive Committee's Far Eastern Department repeatedly sent secret letters to our Party's Central Committee, and the Party apparatus did not introduce these letters to all members of the Central Committee so people were annoyed.

Thus, in October, 1928 there was an historical Seventh Khural of the MPRP. At this meeting, representatives of the Communist International Executive Committee, headed by Comrade Schmiral, participated and with their help the Right Deviationists were exposed, and the general Party line was exposed. Also at this meeting, the Right was smashed completely and was removed from the Party in order to turn the country away from a capitalist path. The feudal lords who had infiltrated the Party apparatus were purged, and the loyal Party activists were promoted. The accumulation of

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1. Communist International or Communist Parties from all over the world.

fortunes was limited, foreign traders were eliminated, and the poor and the middle classes were encouraged to form co-operatives to improve their livelihoods.

The program included a graduated tax by class, co-operative mutual assistance, stronger banks, confiscation of the property of the religious and secular feudal lords, improvement of the lives of the masses of people, development of economic planning, affirmation of Mongol-Soviet friendship, internal democratization of the MPRP, enforcement of strict Party discipline, consolidation of the relationship between the Party and the people, closer relations with the Comintern, and elevation of the cultural level.

In order to execute the decisions of the Central Committee of the MPRP at the Seventh Great Khural, a third set of investigations was arranged to clear out the Party. Thus I was summoned by the local government and went on the investigation team and was then called back to the Finance Ministry, where I was given a high position, which forced me to do my chores during the day and respond to urgent issues at night, such as drafting a new law on the graduated tax policy. I also dealt with such issues as tax increases on the lamas, including those old enough for military service as well as the revision of the registration tax and customs regulations, and the taxes on foreign and domestic exploitative traders. This work proceeded in an orderly fashion, and I tried to execute it all under the guidance of meeren Dorj.<sup>2</sup> I had seven years' experience in doing these jobs which I liked to do and which were up to my abilities, and my experience made the job of balancing and monitoring the annual budget easier.

In 1929, the Central Committee of the MPRP made the decision to implement the confiscation of feudal property and urgently fixed a time limit. The government gave me the job of setting a twenty day time period in which to take over the property of the religious and secular lords in Batsengel mountain *khoshuu*. I went to Tsetserleg, the *aimag* center of the present day Arkhangai *aimag*, and I met the Party Secretary P. Genden.<sup>3</sup> With him, I supervised the appropriation of feudal property and recruited some of the middle class and poor people to help the Party build the collective. I was told by Genden that if I managed to confiscate the feudal property, recruit some of the poor and middle class to establish collectives, and then redistribute this property to the collectives that he would congratulate me.

I departed with two active Party members to the banner office of Batsengel, where the manager held a secret meeting and drew up a list of cruel, brutal, and exploitative religious and feudal nobility. They also registered their animals and belongings and then secretly, among the Party members, divided this list into thirds. Before daybreak, using the relay, the members

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2. The fourth ranking official in *khoshuu* administration.

3. Genden (d. 1937) would become Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (1932–1936). He was executed in 1937 for "conspiring" with Japanese spies and the Buddhist clergy.

went to specific locations and by noon they had impounded the property, counted and registered all the animals, and obtained the feudal signatures on the registry of these properties. If the feudal lords tried to hide or plot amongst themselves to kill or harm the livestock, civil or criminal charges would be brought against them.

At a meeting, I told the poor and middle class people that the Party had impounded the property of the feudal lords, and they described their exploitation by the nobility. I then explained that all the confiscated property would be common property if they were on the collectives. Everyone, however, was disgusted by the idea of the communes, and no one who was able volunteered, although the crippled and the blind living near the monasteries offered to join the communes if the food was free. Each locality was responsible for populating the collectives and had to recruit the poor and middle class. Animals from the registry were given to the communes, and the silver and gold was sent to the State Bank. Whatever remained of value was appraised and then transferred to the co-operative barter center, and the rest was sold at public auction. With the basic work finished, we reported to the Central Committee of the MPRP, where some of the leaders told us that we had relaxed the goals of the Party in transferring the animals to the communes.

We discussed the results of what we had done, and it was obvious that most people had chosen the *artel*<sup>4</sup> form over the collective. Most of those who joined the communes did so voluntarily, but some of the poor were forced onto "the communes for the poor," and some of the animals from the feudal lords were given to them.

At this time, my father was very feeble and although he kept on herding, day by day his stomach worsened. His condition was not critical until an unknown man in my father's area, both a diviner and a doctor, who preferred to be known as the lama Ranjamba, fooled my father into believing in him. He trusted this lama and let himself be examined by him. This wretched lama squeezed out several liters of fresh blood in exchange for a *khadagh*<sup>5</sup> and money. After three days and nights, my father's body became exhausted, he lost his mind, and he died. At the time, I was working long hours on serious work at the Finance Ministry and could not be with my father who had been very weak but of sound mind. Within twenty days after his death, the monk Agvaan offered prayers for the dead. He fooled my mother by claiming my father's soul lingered behind because of his prized animals and to free the soul to go to heaven, prayers had to be read within forty-nine days. Thus, my mother hurriedly had the monk perform these ceremonies, and she gave my father's most prized chestnut horse and white camel to the monk. Hearing all of this, I decided to have the lama charged

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4. Cooperative enterprise.

5. A ceremonial scarf.

with crimes. However, my mother begged me not to start a lawsuit since she only had a little time left. Given those reasons, I dropped the matter. It can be said that the clergy took advantage of people and cheated and swindled them. The higher class lamas were parasitical exploiters and thieves who stole the property of the masses and curtailed our progress.

The counter-revolutionary class of secular feudal lords also conspired against the People's Revolution, tried to stir up the people against the Party, alienate them against the Government, and create and recruit people into a counter conspiracy. The political activity of the poor and middle class of our country grew as they embraced the Party and the Government and protested both the internal and external enemies. May, 1929, during this class struggle, was a critical time for me because the Government appointed me the leader of Bogd Khan mountain *aimag*. When I received this appointment there were twenty-two banners, which today include Bulgan, Töv, Dundgov, Dornogov, Ömnögov, as well as Khangai mountain banner in Arkhangai *aimag*. This large area comprising Khangai Gobi was composed of so many banners that it was difficult to administer because of its size and infrastructure. Although there was a Mongolian shareholders auto-transportation company in Mongolia with the job of carrying the mail, it only worked on transportation between *aimags*. Urgent business in the localities was hard to manage with so many banners and *sums*.

At the previous Seventh Great Khural of the MPRP, the local government administration was broadened, based on the implementation of the goal of strengthening the relationship between the Party and the people. Six *aimags* became twelve *aimags*, the old banners were dismantled, and the *sums* were reorganized more efficiently with greater contact between the *sum* and the *aimag*. In 1929, the Politburo and the government gave me strict orders to finish all preparatory work on the changes concerning Bogd Khan mountain *aimag*. The help of the *aimag* Party leadership was needed to properly carry out this task, so special representatives were appointed to specific banners. It was necessary to examine the official debts of the banners, fix their disorganized financial accounts, issue clear documents, and supervise communication between the *sums*, and my job was to conduct and oversee this work in an orderly manner.

The Central Committee of the MPRP set up special headquarters in the *aimag* centers with six campaign points covered in great detail and with clear instructions for their successful implementation:

1. The lamaseries, the centers of Yellow Faith Buddhism, had all their animals registered, and agreements were made with the local poor and middle class people who would get possession of the herds. The Party encouraged people to become involved in the agreements with the monasteries and in the organization of the selection of representatives

to set up these arrangements. Monastic bursars and accountants were given the forms for compliance agreements on which the transfer of the registered animals to the local people would be recorded. During this process, the upper class lamas and monastic leaders were trying to hide about 10% of their herds. By any measure, this country had about seven hundred monasteries which had two thousand and nine hundred lamasery treasures with more than two million animals, which were given to the poor and middle class to herd.

The people supported this work I was organizing and the poor, especially, were actively involved. The cruel head lamas, on the other hand, were spreading rumors that the lamasery animals were being confiscated, religion was being violated, and the herders would be forced onto communes, each with an "empty bowl."

2. The communes and "artels" previously established were transformed into collectives which were strengthened and extended throughout the country. Without supervision, the local working people carried out and actively implemented the development of the communes. However, local characteristics were not always considered, sometimes leading to the unsuitable communal policy, which caused many people to dislike the collective system. In addition to the massive campaign of registering properties and building the communes, some not very educated Party activists tried to force people to join the collectives so the higher numbers would meet the Party quotas, which pushed the general policy of the Party to the Left. Local officials even falsified the number of voluntary enrollees on the communes. Some local Party members fought to strengthen Party and Government relations with the people by uncovering corruption of some Party officials in the matter of commune enrollment. These honest activists were maligned and called non-revolutionary, non-committed, "on the fence" people while Genden, Badrakh, and Shijee on the Central Committee were protecting the Party's overly Leftist policies of forcing people onto the communes.
3. The Party and the government liberated young lamas from the class of the evil head lamas and changed their lives so these young monks could join the "artels" and work in animal husbandry. Those who became secular civilians and did not get support from their relatives received 10%, those with support from their families received 8%, and those who could live off their own animals received 5%.
4. There was an increased tax on the highest class of lamas, and it was now forbidden to give places in the lamaseries to children eight to eighteen years of age who were not already there.
5. Servants employed by the feudal lords and the wealthy could claim their past wages and, in the future, work under contract.

6. A cultural movement was under way during which the illiterate were, in a short period of time, taught the alphabet, and some people who had some degree of literacy were introduced to the Latin alphabet.

The campaign to implement the above mentioned six points was conducted, but the local people still disliked the idea of collectives. In addition, those who forced people to enroll in the collectives were labeled and were publicly denounced, and many did not come to the collectives' meetings. Even if they did show up, they did not have the ability to work, did not grasp the significance of the commune, and pretended to faint and cause disturbances among the attendees.

In February, 1930 the MPRP held its Eighth Great Khural and the central leadership of the Presidium of the Central Committee failed to face up to the specific nature of the country. The time had come to make the changes in the agricultural economy that would move the nation toward socialism, but many mistaken conclusions had been drawn in the political arena, and the campaign of collectivizing the poor on a mass scale led to an even stronger Leftist line. After this Great Khural, more overtly Leftist activities were conducted when much of the livestock which remained in the possession of the feudal lords was taken back and only 5% was left to the owners. Many well-off members of the middle class were considered "rich people," [and sometimes referred to by the Russian term "kulaks"], and their taxes were raised and their voting rights were curtailed.

At this time, I participated in developing a new system of local government administration and by the end of the year, I had the approval to move the Bogdhan mountain *aimag* Ministry to Ulaan Baatar, where it was repositioned in a small blue brick building, which had previously served as the old government palace. I then worked to create a new Central *aimag*. The government appointed me its Central Committee representative and sent me to the newly established Ömnögov *aimag* along with the military council leader Darjav. We went to the Delger Khangai mountain banner office to work on establishing the Ömnögov *aimag* center and used second hand felt *gers*, tables, and cupboards to hold files. In the *sum* centers all members of the *aimag* were gathered, and the large Khural and the *sum* administration Small Party Khural were elected. The Small Party *aimag* Khural had the task of preparing a report on the administration of the great and small Khurals, and reports followed with specific instructions and the *aimag* elections were conducted truly democratically.

I was appointed by the *aimag*'s Great Khural to lead the *aimag* so before this appointment I had gone to Ulaan Baatar and handed in the work done with the administrators of Töv *aimag*. I returned immediately to Ömnögov *aimag*, which included the present day Dundgov *aimag*, to start my administrative work which was difficult to accomplish relying solely on the horse

relay. Meanwhile, the leadership of the Central Committee of the MPRP criticized the administration of Ömnögov for not executing the decisions of the Eighth Khural regarding the collective movement of all people in the *aimag*, using as an excuse that the people were widely dispersed, and it was hard to collectivize them and that only the simplest enterprises had been established and developed along Right Wing lines. Thus, the *aimag* Party worked with the Revolutionary Youth League to enroll, forcibly if necessary, the poor and middle class onto the collectives. The truth of the matter, however, was that the pressure to join the communes led many to desert the collectives and go abroad.

When many in the *sum* were asked where the *aimag* center<sup>6</sup> should be located, the majority proposed Togshikhkharnuden or Dalanzadgad. They researched the area and found that Dalanzadgad was a place of abundant water, the weather was good, and, in the future, coal could be mined there, so all in all Dalanzadgad was a better location for the *aimag* center. Within a twenty day period, with permission from the government, Delger Khangai was moved and transformed into Dalanzadgad, using one hundred and seventy five camels confiscated from the feudal lords for geldings and carts to form a caravan which settled in Dalanzadgad. They managed to move by their own labor the *aimag* center three hundred kilometers away without getting a single penny of State funds to cover the expenses. Their own workers and officials traveled from the end of September into October, 1931 to settle in the new center. The authorities came to the *aimag* center for a while, and the local people thanked and praised them heartily and offered them *airagh*, milk, and other dairy products. The public offices were *gers* which, to show their support, people had helped erect.

These people lived and worked on the edge of civilization and thus were doubly oppressed by the natural ruggedness of the area and the cruel domination of the feudal lords, which encouraged their doggedness and determination.

In this *aimag*, collectivization was the most important part of the six point campaign, and it was not a system that the people anticipated and desired. Furthermore, the weaknesses of collectivization were exploited by the deviationists and counter-revolutionaries who alienated the local people from the Party and Government. By the summer of 1931, a counter revolutionary leader stealthily plotted to entice the seventy families of Norov, Bayandalai, and Khurmen *sums* to skip across the border. At this time the defense of the southern frontier side of the *aimag* was weak, and there was no communication to detect and stop them. On the other hand, the Central Committee of the MPRP made a wrong decision at the Eighth

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6. *Aimag* center would be the location for the provincial government and the best medical, educational, and cultural facilities.

Party Khural by considering the middle classes as rich people so there was a legal directive increasing their taxes.

When Samdan, the Secretary of our *aimag* Party's Committee saw this, he had the *aimag* administration declare that, in general, ordinary people with more than 70 *bod* [a unit of livestock measurement, equivalent to one cow] would be considered kulaks, and it was necessary to double their tax. The decision of the *aimag* administrative authority did not sit well with our *aimag*. So, instead those who had over five hundred large animals and those who had accumulated wealth by exploiting others were to have their taxes increased. The Finance Ministry examined this and didn't disagree with what it found, thereby leaving it all up to the *aimag* administration. The *aimag* Party committee and the inspection commission informed the Central Committee of the MPRP that the Party leaders had not followed through on the Party directives and were even inclined to follow the Right Deviationists by supporting the wealthy.

Sodnom, a leading member of the Party Central Committee, came to the *aimag* center to examine the allotment of taxes. Then, he examined the registry of tax payers and said the *aimag* improperly overextended its powers. However, he said to the Central Committee that it was important that the Party and the *aimag* should arrive at a joint decision and send the report to the Central Committee of the MPRP. In order to implement the decisions of the Eighth Great Khural, local and state parties, the central Party apparatus, and the managers of the State and public organizations should, without fear and restraint, enroll and promote the poor to leadership roles. Many people who were illiterate and lacked work experience were advanced to responsible positions in these organizations and even though they tried their best, the practical side of their work caused them great stress and no matter how many training sessions they sat through, they could not grasp the lessons of the seminars and were utterly confused. They figured that the Party would look upon them more favorably if they wore Leftist blinders than if they harbored Right Wing ideas. Therefore, they caused misinterpretations of the Party and government directives and decisions.

It is much more difficult to fix a job that has already started going wrong than beginning a new job. At this time, the Government was denied an organizational role, and the Party organizations made economic decisions unilaterally while the State government focused on carrying out the issues of general administration of services. Consequently, the democratization of the *sum* and *bag* administrative offices was impeded by the appointment of the local Party officials, which further hindered the wishes and aspirations of the people. The cruel upper class and prominent lamas who were counter revolutionaries spread rumors that shortly the wealthiest of the common people would be detained or arrested and stripped of all their property and that they

should flee while they could, since the Panchen Lama<sup>7</sup> would honor them by coming to revive Yellow Faith Buddhism. Because of the lies, rumors, and slander, some of the dim-witted or confused wealthier herders became uneasy and wondered if possessing so many animals might lead to some misfortune, like the loss of their voting rights. They feared that they might even be held criminally responsible and punished. The rumors spread by the lamas continued to stir up these random thoughts as they tried to find ways out of this complicated situation and figure out what to do with their animals.

In 1932, the cruel head lamas in the monasteries in Rashaan *sum* in Khövsgöl *aimag* and Tariat *sum* in Arkhangai *aimag* and the feudal lords conspired and created an insurgency movement, and many local activists and honest people were plundered and killed with harmful effects in the monasteries of Ömnögov *aimag* and Tsogt Olzii and Javkhlan *sums*. The Yellow Faith feudal lords like Ganjurvaa, the reincarnation of the high lama, and Dilev Khutukhtu fled across the border with the assistance of the cruel head lama of the Bag Modni lamasery. They were all involved in the counter revolutionary insurgency in Arkhangai *aimag*, using the Oldokh monastery and the monasteries in Delger Khangai *sum* as the bases for their counter revolutionary ideas.

The counter revolutionary brigand leader Delegsambuu, servant to the abovementioned monks, crossed the border unnoticed to obtain arms and equipment and went stealthily back and forth across the border to plunder the local *sum* administration and try to destroy the *sum* administration committee. In the course of doing this, he tortured and killed Gurgenjav of the local Party committee as well as Lodon, a department representative, terrorized the people of Tsogt-Ovoo and Olzii *sums*, and with the cruel head lamas created havoc and started a movement which encouraged people to flee.

The young woman, who was leader of Tsogt-Ovoo *sum*'s Revolutionary Youth League, and two *sum* officials—seven people altogether—joined forces and tried to dissuade the deluded herders from following the counter revolutionaries. They explained the Government policies and exposed the baseless rumors of the counter revolutionaries and told them how important it was to live peacefully in the motherland. Instead of running away, they should consider organizing caravans and collecting merchandise to sell at home. Meanwhile, as this was going on, they were arrested by the above mentioned bandits who tortured them and had six of them thrown down from a high precipice. Those who remained were shot through the chest.

I reported to the Central Committee of the MPRP and the Government about the great unrest inside and outside the *aimag* and proposed to the

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7. The second most important dignitary in Tibetan Buddhism.

*aimag* Party committee leaders' Khural that in the *sums* along the eastern border we should work vigilantly to intensify Party propaganda and strengthen the borders. In response, the Party committee leader, Samdan, and the department representative, Khas Ochir, told me they knew everything in detail, that I did not grasp how much work the Party had done for the poor and the middle class, and that I over exaggerated the influence of the counter revolutionaries. They advised me that the Executive Committees of the *aimag* should focus on improving their control over the *aimag* and *sum* administration in recruiting and mobilizing the rich people and others who possessed means of transport to work for the administration in an effort to increase the capacity of the relay. They also wished to transplant the cruel head lamas of the monasteries to Bazartuiten River and subject them to forced labor. The *aimag* committee proposed these measures, instead of dealing with the more pressing issues at hand, which they postponed, while they passed the time.

In the spring of 1932, there was news of the counter revolutionary bandit Delegsambuu, and his group who went to the south to Tsogt, Olzii, and Javkhlan where the nearly four hundred families of these three *sums* were aided in their flight by Delegsambuu. I, with some officials from the *aimag* center and a few soldiers, tried to circumvent the flight of all the families. However, under the cover of darkness, the bandits and all those who were able bodied took the horses and animals and fled across the border. The majority of those left behind were initially pulled into this frenzy of flight, but they were too weak to cross the frontier and were left with the small animals.

During the work of rehabilitating the areas that had been destroyed or plundered, the counter revolutionary bandits plundered the Javkhlan *sum* administration and the first co-operative, and some of the bandits who had fled across the border came back. The property of many honest local people was repeatedly plundered and their peace disturbed.

Since the border was poorly guarded, although the *aimag* tried its best to catch the bandits it was impossible to arrest many of them and they got through.

In the summer of 1932, the Party Central Committee had the important work of correcting the errors of the Leftists so both the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party, Shizhe, and the head of the Party Control Committee, Erendavaa, were sent to the *aimag* center. They did not bother to fully acquaint themselves with the work of the *aimag* and therefore only partially understood the Leftists' errors. They limited their work to publishing a few pamphlets related to religious beliefs and issues. During that time, the Secretary of the Central Committee, Shizhe, examined the cases of the arrested counter revolutionaries. Disregarding the negative consequences

of their crimes, he issued orders to kill the people sixty to seventy years old who could not work and force those who could work to do hard labor.

Since Shizhe's directive did not follow the law, the *aimag* executive administration invited a councilor from the Ministry of Justice who, once he had studied these cases, set the majority free. A few hard core offenders were brought to the attention of the *aimag* judicial department and dealt with according to the law.

By the end of June of the same year, the Central Committee of the MPRP and the Central Control Commission put together a special third plenum meeting to focus on the situation of the Left Deviationists to whom little attention had been paid and whose mistaken policies did not take into account the uniqueness of Mongolia.

The majority of them were removed from the Central Committee but Genden, a Left Deviationist himself, who had done the lion's share of these leftist deviations, remained on the Central Committee through his own cunning and trickery. The Central Committee of the MPRP set about correcting all the mistakes of the Left Deviationists in Ömnögov *aimag*, and Kh. Choibalsan was sent to implement the new policy in the *aimag*. The MPRP reformist ideas were warmly greeted by all the workers in the *aimag*, who rallied behind the People's Government and began to put all their effort into improving their livelihood through their work of herding in the wide open spaces of their beloved motherland.

Choibalsan called and presided over the Great Khural where the damage by the deviationists over the past three years was clearly revealed. Reports were given about the directions for and future implementation of the new reformist policies, and based on the criticisms of the representatives, specific resolutions were adopted. Choibalsan proposed Choloon, a member of the military council, for head *aimag* administrator, but his nomination was not accepted by all the representatives because they wanted Sambuu to be kept in that position. The Khural of the *aimag* took a short break and when the session started again, Choibalsan said: "Choloon that heavy set fellow, or Chunky Choloon is the senior leader of the People's Revolutionary Army who did not participate in the political deviations and the Khural should consider this." However, he proposed that Comrade Sambuu be elected leader of the *aimag* executive administration and head of the *aimag*'s judicial department. But, at this time, he would be transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture. All agreed, and the *aimag*'s Great Khural elected Choloon head of the *aimag*.

After this, I was leader of the *aimag* court, and I worked at the rank of deputy in the *aimag* authority before moving on to lead a department in the Ministry of Agriculture. During this period, I had enough time to work on my reference book on herding. By the end of 1937, the Central

Committee of the MPRP and the government appointed me ambassador to the Soviet Union, with its capital in Moscow. I was the representative of the full sovereign Mongolian people, and I had the honor to carry out this position to the best of my ability. My Soviet comrades gave me warm support, and I devoted all my energies to justifying the faith the Party had in me.

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## Representing Our Government to Our Friendly Neighbor

By 1937, the Soviet Union had become, at the request of our government, a major source of livelihood for the people of our country. The Soviet Union had aided in the development of a Department of Animal Husbandry, resulting in a continual increase in our productivity, had paid close attention to drinking water, had freely offered the assistance of technicians in training three hundred veterinary specialists, and had donated haying machines. In the short term, the mowing stations were organized and operated by new local organizations which, at this time, were under my supervision at the Agricultural Ministry. The stations were established in areas with a good growth of grass which supported the expansion of settlements in hospitable areas and led to the implementation of the economic measures and the maintenance of our livelihood. The youth, the unemployed, and poor lamas had to be invited to work and to this end specialists offered advice and help round the clock teaching the Mongolian people, training them, and getting them accustomed to study and master those skills they would need to become active workers. They were encouraged to cherish their machinery, to adjust Mongolian horses to machines, and manage all the difficulties connected to this work. All my efforts to that end were highly valued by the MPRP.

Our government had great confidence in me and so bestowed on me the favor of putting me forward as the Ambassador to the USSR. The decision was made within seven days. Having crossed the border and with the Motherland no longer in sight, I did not know the situation and the propriety of diplomatic relations in many foreign countries and was uneasy, so I requested instructions from Prime Minister Amar,<sup>1</sup> who received me while

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1. Anandyn Amar (1886–1939) would be purged in 1939 for crimes consisting of "opportunism and nationalism."

he was reading a South Tibetan sutra in a wooden box. I spoke respectfully to Prime Minister Amar who answered with the advice: "Why can't you do the work of an ambassador? Furthermore, you might meet Comrade Choibalsan for advice and instructions." It was now necessary to make all preparations quickly, and that day I waited attentively to have a meeting with the leading Member of the Central Committee of the Party, First Vice Minister Marshal Choibalsan, who had clear instructions for me: "As a sitting representative of our people who are great friends with the Soviet Union, you are most fortunate to have work in the capital city of Moscow as a representative of our people to our great friend, the Soviet Union, and its Ministry of Foreign Affairs. You need a clear image of each world event, and if you are knowledgeable about your work, you will be able to talk in an open and friendly manner and that will assist you in building brotherly friendship between our countries." We talked seriously, but in a friendly manner as an elder brother to a younger brother, about urgent matters and about assistance between our two countries.

Marshall Choibalsan further made clear that M. M. Litvinov was the Commissar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Soviet Union and his deputy was Stomoniakov who was in charge of Asian and African matters.<sup>2</sup> The head of the Far Eastern Department was Kozlov. "You must make sure that you meet these people and establish close relations with them. All diplomats in Moscow, except for the Mongolian and Tuvan ambassadors, are from capitalist countries, and they maintain their own representative offices. In case they need to meet you, you must receive advance permission and clearance from the Mongolian government. The response will be given officially, but it is very important to be prudent and take all precautions to that end."

He continued: "It is necessary to work constantly on the relations with our comrades who are involved in Soviet-Mongolian trade as well working with other departments in the Ministry of Foreign Trade in the USSR on questions relating to the government's relationship towards commerce, especially in those commodities that are under order from the Soviet Union." Then Marshal Choibalsan added a warning: "From time to time, Japanese imperialists attack our eastern border in the area of Tamsagbulag, Bulanders and Adagdulan, though our people will wage war to protect their independence and freedom. There is a treaty of mutual assistance between Mongolia and the Soviet Union, according to which the Soviet Union would aid Mongolia by deploying powerful troop battalions. This is a serious issue and one must be mindful of it day and night. The question of the defense

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2. Maxim Litvinov (1876–1951) was Commissar of Foreign Affairs but was removed from his office shortly after because of Nazi Germany's unwillingness to deal with a Jew. In 1941, he became Ambassador to the U.S. Boris Stomoniakov was Assistant Commissar of Foreign Affairs.

of the country should be dealt with through the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Defense and through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Further, we have a few highly disciplined students, each of whom studies in the proper specialized schools in several cities in the USSR, and you must make a concerted effort to meet them and become involved with their educational development. If we succeed in making them highly educated personnel, they will be like gold to our country and in turn they will make gold for our country."

The day for my journey arrived, my clothes were prepared, and, following a government directive, a so-called American 8 brand car came for me at eight o'clock in the morning on November 3, 1937. Before my departure, I met with the Soviet Ambassador Mironov who congratulated me on my ambassadorship and said that we were like a younger brother and an older brother. As we would say in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we could promote, strengthen, and celebrate our friendship. He went on to say that he would ask his Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare a train for me in the city of Ulaan Ude.<sup>3</sup> I spoke frankly with the Russian Ambassador and told him that I needed his help since I had no experience in being an ambassador. Mironov replied that he was a soldier and that diplomatic protocol was not based on strictly constructed laws but was more of an art based on each country's uniqueness and depended on each diplomat's own knowledge, talent, and personality. In a way, he said, diplomatic protocol was an evolving science, and when you are in Moscow feel free to speak to protocol officers and ask them to lecture you on specific topics. Therefore, in the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I talked with friends and in my spare time from work I made cordial diplomatic connections and from time to time attended lectures and even gave advice.

When I was leaving Ulaan Baatar, I saw formations of powerful Red soldiers on the boulevard, their weaponry resounding along Consular Avenue as they filed continuously past the Khujir corner. On the appointed time, my family and I departed Ulaan Baatar, as Marshal Choibalsan and the heads of many ministries appeared with champagne and *airagh*, and they all saw me off happily. The trade representative, Serayter, who was on a business trip, and Natzag, who was leaving Mongolia for medical treatment, were also in the car with us. We all stopped at the Tsaagan Eregin base to rest a day and a night and the next day at eight o'clock in the evening, we arrived at Ulaan Ude.

A Soviet comrade told us that we should all have a quiet and pleasant rest before leaving the next day on the international Trans-Siberian railroad, which traveled through many countries. We agreed, and time allowed us to meet with Tserendorjev, the Leader of the Council of Ministers of the

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3. Capital city of the Buryat Republic in the USSR.

Autonomous Buryat Embassy, so we paid our respects and discussed our traditional and friendly relations. After that visit, we went and saw the teachers at the Mongolian "rabfak" (Workers' Institute). The students assembled class by class so we could know how they learned. I advised them to study well. The teachers and the students attending the school had given us a performance. The teachers thanked us for our visit and assured us that they would write letters to the embassy, after which we all said good-bye and dispersed.

Having stopped overnight, we left the next morning at 8 o'clock and traveled to the Yaroslav station in Moscow. We were met by the Protocol Department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs where everyone greeted us. The leader was Barkov, our ambassadorial secretary was Gombosüren, the official order worker was Bat Ochir, the translator was Vasiliev, and the permanent representative of the Embassy was Dugarjav. We then settled into the Embassy building.

On December 5, 1937 I met with leader Barkov of the Protocol Department and presented a request to meet M. M. Litvinov, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Barkov assured me that his Protocol Department would be actively participating in organizing a ceremonial event for me at which I would present my credentials to M. I. Kalinin, the leader of the Soviet presidium.<sup>4</sup> He further advised me: "Honored ambassador, when you meet our leadership for the first time, I would advise you to wear a black suit with the slits on the side, a cylindrical hat, a starched white shirt with bow tie, and shiny black shoes, all of which are the custom when being received according to our own protocol."

Regarding these words, I hoped that I would be excused if I could not manage to find the time to prepare my clothes suitably, though for the sake of propriety I had to have the customary black suit. I asked that our country's uniqueness be considered, and my request was favorably received. Thus, when the Protocol Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed me of a meeting with the Minister at 11 o'clock the next day, they granted my request to wear a casual black suit. When the appointed time arrived, I went along, with the interpreter Vasiliev, to the meeting with Commissar M. M. Litvinov, Assistant Commissar Stomoniakov, and the leader of the Far Eastern Department Kozlov who greeted me in a friendly manner and welcomed everybody with warm gratitude, which could lead to future co-operation. Litvinov talked with us and told us that we should work, through Comrade Barkov, with the leader of our Far Eastern Department and Assistant Commissar Stomoniakov. Litvinov said that I would be introduced to the Chair of the Presidium of the USSR and that I should give my credentials and the report to Barkov who as the head of the Protocol

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4. Mikhail Kalinin (1875–1946) was perceived of as an ally of Stalin. He was Chair of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, generally a ceremonial post.

Department would inform me about it. Then he left. So I managed to meet and become acquainted with all these people officially.

Two weeks later at ten o'clock in the morning, the Chair of the Presidium, M. I. Kalinin, conveyed the message to me regarding the protocol and asked me to meet with Barkov, who would come in the car of the Presidium leader to take me to meet the Chair. While I was waiting for that day to come, Barkov, the head of the Protocol Department, arrived in a big elegant car. There was a pre-meeting and at the meeting itself it was confirmed that the Chair of the Presidium would accept my credentials. I was told not to read from notes and speak "off the cuff" stressing the strong brotherhood between our two countries. After that, I got into that big car with Gombosüren, Secretary of the Embassy, who had a loud voice and Serayter, the trade representative, and the translator Vasiliev. We all went in the car to the main gate of the Kremlin where the commandant of the Kremlin met us and we went up the stairs, where on all the landings stood high-ranking military officials. And so into the large hall in the Kremlin came our honorable comrade M. I. Kalinin, Chair of the Presidium. On his right stood the Secretary A. F. Gorky, and at his left stood M. M. Litvinov from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I toasted our two nations whose relationship was like that between a younger and an elder brother who could carry out their close, strong, and sacred friendship and express their mutual gratitude. The translator finished translating all of this into Russian, and M. I. Kalinin and all of us met in a special room, and I spoke on behalf of the Central Committee of the MPRP and our Government in the name of the Mongolian people, and I expressed sincere and warm gratitude to M. I. Kalinin who replied: "Thank you. You are a herding country, so weather conditions are a concern to you." I answered: "This year is special. Thus far, all is well and there has been no 'zud.'" And he went on to ask me if we were frightened of the Japanese to which I answered: "No, we are not frightened. Our freedom and independence are being protected by your great Red Army that has already, by an agreement, sent troops to help us in Mongolia. And the honored M. I. Kalinin has said that our joint forces will fight in the battle for freedom to strengthen and protect our independence. Your huge Red military will fight the Japanese aggressor's 'snout' and beat them off." After the meeting was over, I remarked that it was desirable for me to have an audience from time to time, and he answered that he would meet me any time.

Thus Barkov ran the high-ranked government ceremony, which followed regulations, and the leader of the Protocol Department mentioned how grateful he was to the Ambassador to receive the credentials. Barkov mentioned that there were many other diplomats and asked me if it would be advisable to translate notes about my appointment into French for members of the diplomatic corps. I responded that we have no diplomatic relations with these other diplomatic corps, and in addition we don't have

a French translator. Thus I declined for the time being. Barkov explained that the leader of the diplomatic corps was the Ambassador from Afghanistan and that I might wish to meet with him, though it wasn't necessary to meet with the other diplomats. We talked for a while until we reached the Embassy, and then we took our leaves.

That very morning after I presented my credentials my government was informed by telegram. The next morning, with the trade representative Serryter, I met with the Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Comrade Sladkovskii, the head of the Far Eastern Department, who was in charge of Soviet Mongolian trade. We had met before, and now we had the opportunity to have a friendly chat, become acquainted, and have discussions about the trade between Mongolia and the Soviet Union. Later, we celebrated all the work that had gone into this relationship and our deep friendship, and we agreed to talk about practical issues in an open and frank manner because doing so would help each of us perform our respective duties. Then we bade farewell.

After this, I met the army General A. I. Antonov and General V. E. Makarov, and I had the opportunity to mention that spies of the Japanese imperialists patrolled in the southeastern part of our country and along the eastern frontier inside Tamsagbulag, Bulanders, and Adagdulan, which were regions that had been repeatedly attacked.<sup>5</sup> During this serious time, the glorious Red military, which was prepared to defend our homeland, had to be warmly congratulated. They responded that their brave military and our brave Mongolian military together would encroach on the enemy areas and, without a doubt, would destroy them. I was told that our military could order the weapons and the technology and under their guidance our military would prepare its new power with the help of the Frunze Academy, known as the Lenin Academy. Officers were trained in Kharkov, Kiev, and Tambov, as well as in Chkalov city. The Russian general went on to say that if I wished to visit the Mongolians studying in the Soviet Union it could be arranged, so that I could become better acquainted with the students at the military academy and learn about their training and studies.

After this, I went regularly from city to city to visit Mongolian students, which pleased them and made them happy. I also met the leader of the Higher Education Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR and the honored member of the Central Committee Comrade Kaftanov. I requested that the administration of the universities and the professional schools in the Russian Far East and other institutes and schools keep me informed about the students from Mongolia studying there, and I proposed to the Russian Deputy Minister of Education that he

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5. Aleksei Antonov (1896–1962), a General in the Red Army who was not entangled in the purges. In 1956, he married the Boshoi Ballet's ballerina Olga Lepeshinskaya (1916–2008).

keep me informed how the Mongolian students were doing, and he promised to do so.

The Russian Deputy Minister of Education said that he hoped the schools would welcome me. As we talked, I was pleased that we established that I would look out for the Mongolian students, and he expressed the hope that I would keep in touch with those students who year after year come to study in the USSR. The Deputy Minister of Education went on to say that the request to enroll in the Russian schools had to be arranged three months in advance because there was a good deal of preparatory work to do.

In the interval, the head of Moscow's diplomatic corps was the Ambassador from the Afghan Peoples' Republic. I was given permission from the secretary at the embassy to meet the ambassador and talk to him in everyday language and raise some questions. For example, should a diplomatic representative follow his own thoughts and use his discretion on certain occasions when a member of a government of a sitting country goes by invitation to meet the government leader of a great foreign power, or participates in a farewell ceremony, or attends an official concert or a reception ceremony, or must find time to have his clothes fitted, or congratulate the leader of his motherland, or send a condolence message, or respect those who were being honored by raising the national flag or, in grief, dipping it? The Afghan ambassador offered to help me whenever I needed him. These meetings with representatives of many Soviet organizations were the first step in my ambassadorial work, and they offered me much support.

At the end of 1937 and into 1938, I learned about the daily affairs at the Embassy and concluded that most of the work was related to specialists who were asked to work in our economic and cultural organizations. I also met our students in the Soviet educational system and attended events in the main Soviet cities where I met specialists and saw things for myself as a representative for students abroad, including looking after and disciplining them to make sure they developed into good Soviet students. I also worked on trade treaties relating to exports under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade. Orders for imports were from time to time coupled with barter orders so all these transactions had to be urgently examined. I needed to prioritize orders that were needed immediately so I required stationary, and I also wrote reports to send to Mongolia on respectable areas of work. I worked collaboratively with other people in the mission regarding their different areas of expertise. Additional orders consisted of ten thousand types of goods and commodities, which mostly included peoples' daily necessities, and could be organized into four different categories with little difficulty.

At this time, our country had no trade relations with the Chinese because our people were in the habit of letting the USSR handle trade through their trade organizations in compressed green tea, pipe tobacco, iron stirrups, and saddle cloth. There were delays with the Chinese who did not always

deliver the ordered goods on time so we sought advice from our Russian comrades in dealing with this problem. In addition, our professional Soviet comrades studied the manufacture of red quality tobacco and knew it had to have an improved odor, and they also worked to set up a factory for compressed green tea in Southern Georgia so the Georgians could export their compressed green tea to Mongolia.

Only some goods had a name and a technical explanation, and there was a shortage of professional experts, all of which prevented us from shipping Russian imports to Mongolia in a timely fashion. Sometimes, before our Mongolian authorities ordered goods manufactured in Soviet industries, the order was suddenly changed which made the organizational work of the Soviet Trade Commission more difficult. There were many orders for goods from our industries, and it was necessary to answer about twenty to thirty telegrams concerning the orders from the embassies each day.

There was constant communication with the proper Soviet organizations, and we relied on the help of our warm and professional friends in making and carrying out a monthly and quarterly plan. The chief members of the CPSU and the Deputy Leader of Council of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the honored Comrade and ambassador to Mongolia in 1938–9 A. I. Mikoyan, paid special attention to an economic relationship between our two countries, which was important in light of the build up of the Japanese aggression on our eastern border and which called for clear protection if there was a just war which threatened the independence of Mongolia.<sup>6</sup> We also had to pay attention to strengthening our frontiers. In case of an attack, trade talks and agreements were essential, as were additional orders for food imports, and the most up to date work for institutions required constant supervision. It was important and necessary for us to expedite trade in machine technology whether from a southern, eastern, or central direction. So, from time to time, I personally met with Comrade Mikoyan to express this wish as well as to raise questions and reach decisions.

From the beginning of January until May 1939, there was a period of Japanese military threat on our borders as the Japanese 64th regiment gradually encroached and attacked near Bayantsagaan on the Khalkh River, and a motorized detachment and all sorts of military units crossed our border and began to fight. The Soviet-Mongolian army besieged the fully armed Japanese who repeatedly attacked the territory of our country throughout August 27 and 28, 1939. In Moscow, we received the news that the Japanese had been smashed, and we were very grateful and expressed our thanks to the Soviet government.

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6. N. Anastas Mikoyan (1895–1978), of Armenian descent, was Commissar for External and Internal Trade at this time. He would assume numerous positions throughout his career and wound up as Chair of the Presidium.

As a result of the victory in this sacred and just war, we heard that about sixty thousand Japanese soldiers were killed or wounded, about seven hundred Japanese planes were destroyed, and two hundred big guns and a great number of machine guns and all sorts of weapons were captured. This was a great victory for the freedom of the People's Republic of Mongolia and the strengthening of the sacred borders of our country, which had been defended through heroic events and battles commanded by the most experienced generals and our victorious and powerful Red military who worked shoulder to shoulder with the Russian military to win the war and restore the peace.

The USSR devoted its resources to protecting Mongolia from the threat of aggressive war against our Mother country, and with much kindness, it also worked to finish the connections of the wide gauge railroad from Solovyovo in Russia to Bayantumen and the narrow gauge railroad from Bayantumen to Tamsagbulag, as well as building, in a short time, the road from Ondor-Khanaas to Bayantumen. All these projects were extremely valuable.

Without delay after the battle of the Khalkh River, the honored General Secretary of the CPSU and leader, I. V. Stalin, received Marshal Choibalsan at the Kremlin together with Comrade V. M. Molotov. Marshal Choibalsan greeted Comrade Stalin warmly and during their talk he requested the wide gauge railroad from Naushki in Russia to Ulaan Baatar. Stalin replied that it would be considered after surveying the territory and then said jokingly that the railroad to the east was a gift because of the Japanese attacks. We wanted a strategic and central location for the railroad to advance trade and culture between Russia and Mongolia, as Marshal Choibalsan affirmed. He also wondered about the timing of the completion of this railroad and reminded us to ask our Soviet colleagues about all these issues that needed to be resolved. Prior to this, I had reported to Marshal Choibalsan on my work and requested consideration of these three issues:

1. A special entity within the joint Ministry council was to be established to deal with the centralization of economic issues of the import, export, and supervision of goods between the Soviet Union and Mongolia.
2. To report through our Embassy to the Soviet Foreign Ministry's Department of Far Eastern Affairs three months in advance on those students recruited to study in the USSR. Since many of our students spoke Russian poorly, they could not take the exams in chemistry and physics, so a one month review course to prepare for their exams had to be established.
3. Another problem for the Soviet government was the lack of a centralized process of handling requests from Mongolia for specialists in areas ranging from arts and culture to agriculture. Henceforth, the Soviet

government demanded that such requests be sent at least two months in advance so there would be enough time to bring the specialists and prepare them.

I presented these issues to Marshal Choibalsan who passed them on to the Central Committee of the MPRP, which indicated it would respond later. Once these problems had been solved, the work became easier, and the ambassador's workload was less difficult to manage, which also helped our Soviet comrades and made our efforts mutually beneficial.

At the end of 1938, Chagdarjav, the leader of our Transport Ministry, and a delegation of trade representatives arrived to conduct talks on the 1939 import-export orders. But on his own initiative, Chagdarjav visited Soviet industry and introduced and added orders which led to the million ruble discrepancy in the import-export trade between the two countries.

All of this concerned our Comrade Commissar A. I. Mikoyan and, after official discussions, the arbitrary increase in various goods was cancelled because of so much fiddling around for about five months, and this trade discrepancy of the millions of rubles was brought to a close. In May, after a discussion I signed the agreement and returned to Ulaan Baatar.

The next year attention was paid to sending the import-export orders to Moscow one month in advance and when all questions were resolved from both sides our representatives arrived for a brief visit. Our representatives were involved in trade negotiations for a short time during which there was the chance to successfully work out the regulations.

The Russian government was alerted early to the threat of fascism in Italy, Germany, and Japan and made efforts to strengthen its borders. The danger of Fascist Germany beginning a European war in many countries was clear in the spring of 1939 when Poland was captured, and the attack on France began. Using this window of opportunity, the threat of attack on the USSR was removed because the frontier was strengthened and steps were taken to draw up a non-aggression pact with Germany. Government buildings in Moscow were heavily fortified, and the Soviet Union managed to proceed successfully with its planned objectives during this time of peace.

I was received by our friend, the Soviet ambassador the Commissar of Foreign Affairs from the USSR, V. M. Molotov, and he became acquainted with the working conditions and said that he would support and assist our government in the questions and disputes with Japan over the Manchukuo border. I described this discussion to Choibalsan, and I was appointed Deputy Prime Minister by the Marshal. Comrade V. M. Molotov urgently stated to Marshal Choibalsan that soon Deputy Prime Minister Jamsrangiin Sambuu would be appointed to handle negotiations with Japan on the Manchukuo border issues. Maps and documents on the disputed border were urgently sent to Moscow, and the Japanese Embassy was notified. Our

government representative Jamsrangiin himself, in due course, prepared for several days documents in the Russian, Japanese, and Mongolian languages, and he went to Manchuria with the agreement written in all three languages. He worked for several days with no results. Later, V. M. Molotov spoke to the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow, and the main agreement was reached about this matter, which was of great political significance.

From 1937 until the end of 1939, with the aid of the USSR, our railroad was put into operation, and the central direction was toward Tsagan-ereg and the transshipment base was in Sükhbataar from where the railroad went as far as Ulaan Baatar, and between Ulaan Baatar and Nailakh, which helped both our political and economic existence.

On December 12, 1939 Marshal Choibalsan arrived in Moscow on a holiday and got permission to meet with Stalin, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, and we came to the Kremlin Palace to see Stalin. Comrades V. M. Molotov and A. I. Mikoyan were also present. Marshal Choibalsan expressed warm gratitude for the pledge the USSR had made to develop a meat cooperative in Ulaan Baatar. In addition, he appreciated the USSR's promise to expand an iron foundry, which could make and repair everything except new automobile motors. Comrade Stalin responded positively and stated that Comrade A. I. Mikoyan would give us an official answer later. Meanwhile, he asked what the number of our herds was, which according to Marshal Choibalsan, was twenty six million and that we would aim to raise even more. Stalin answered that our country had the possibility of delivering even more than the many million animals, and he spoke in friendly terms about all sorts of things.

Meanwhile our government's military units requisitioned all the butter and the edible greens and quickly loaded them for delivery to the USSR, even though some of our own military units were ill with scurvy. Then Comrade A. I. Mikoyan, the Commissar of Foreign Trade, wished to expedite the importation of butter and edible greens. Comrade Mikoyan said this: "Your country is a herding country and you have the possibility of trading butter with us for a just price. If you continue to send these goods, we can sell you milk and butter machines. Mongolia must also succeed in planting green crops to raise food for the military as well as for the official local economy. Some people wished to construct a meat combine in Ulaan Baatar, which may not be convenient since animals need pasture and would not be transported by the railroads. Thus the processing factories should be located near where the animals graze." I relayed all of this to the Mongolian government, which considered all of these policies and implemented them.

Time after time the Embassy maintained friendly and close relations with schools in the USSR where our students studied such as the Far Eastern-Oriental Workers Communist University, the Trade Institute under

the aegis of both the Centrosoyuz, and colleges and institutes for medical doctors and veterinarians as well as a special college for railroad workers. Our students were also educated in communications, culture, science, and many other branches of study. The embassy knew individually each person by discipline, so suitable advice and instruction could be given continually. Our students had no particular deficiencies and studied hard, and our Party and country had faith in their reputation.

I also communicated with the Soviet Ministry of Defense and together with its representative traveled to Kiev, Kharkov, Tambov, and Chkalov to visit students, including those studying in military schools as well as meeting and talking to the teachers in each city. I saw to the education of these students and became familiar with their disciplines so I could advise each one on his area of study and correct deficiencies in future lessons in the hope of having appreciable success with these students. The Soviet administration encouraged frequent visits to these schools. The Soviet Ministry of Defense was a great help in these cities, and since these trips were not only about visiting schools, I had a good time becoming acquainted with many of the cities. The university in Irkutsk was an excellent school of finance which Comrade Yu. Tsedenbal attended. He was a fine student and served as a model for our other students.

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## The Soviet Union Breaks Up an Attack

On June 22, 1941, a holiday, Hitler's fascists established a military front from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea with 170 airplanes and tank and motorcycle divisions and broke faith by crossing the Soviet border. After that, Hitler's German Embassy in Moscow officially announced war. Having learned this, the Chair of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, I. V. Stalin, made the decision to organize a Committee of National Defense. At 11 o'clock on the very day of Hitler's fascist betrayal, the leading member of the Committee, V. M. Molotov, made a radio appeal to the Soviet people that the need to protect the Motherland had arisen because of the brutal attack on the Soviet front by Hitler's fascists and at the same time stressed that each Soviet comrade must show signs of heroism. On that day beginning at 3 o'clock, along the road to the west of the capital city of Moscow, many military units with powerful weapon technology densely filed along in a splendid military march.

Before this war, Hitler's fascists had attacked, conquered, captured, and dominated these economically and technically developed countries: Poland, France, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Austria, Denmark, and Norway, and utilizing their resources, fascist Germany temporarily dominated the war in the beginning. This was because many cities in the southwest including Minsk, the capital of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Belarus, and Odessa had been attacked and brutally plundered. In many of its towns where simple, ordinary, and gentle people lived, their valuable and important history and heritage had all been destroyed in the hostilities and by fire. The Hitler fascists attacked like madmen, and even the birth place of the great October Revolution and its very monument, Leningrad, was bombed, swamped, and besieged by that

"black rook" Hitler, although the Soviet Red Army and the brave Soviet people with strong determination resisted in spite of a shortage of food and drink. The conditions demanded patience and toughness from each person in order to defeat the enemy and bravely protect Leningrad. At this difficult time, the Soviet Ministry of Defense used its airplanes to protect the people and deliver, if only sporadically, food and provisions amidst enemy fire.

Hitler's fascists planned to smash the Soviet Red Army in a very short time, and Hitler had planned that his soldiers would be ready to finish his "Hitler Hurricane" by the end of August, and by September would be ready to head towards Moscow. So the German SS division with great arrogance and ambition attacked Mozhaisk and Kalinin in the hopes of felling Moscow before the cold winter weather set in. At the same time there was fierce fighting between Hitler's fascists and the Red Army on the other side of the city of Tula. The Soviet Red Army in Moscow attacked the strong Fascist army for a while and protected the city even though the Germans had superior military strength of 1.4 fold, tank strength of 2.2 fold, large guns and mortar shell strength of 1.9 fold, and airplane strength of 2.6 fold.

On the 14th of October in the northwest and in the direction of Volokolamsk, units of the Red military organized during this time of war for a fierce battle, especially, the distinguished major general I. V. Panfilov who commanded the special artillery division which dealt a bitter blow to the enemy. This group of warriors protected the area and, for ten days, Volokolamsk, destroying the enemy's eighty tanks and several military battalions. The enemy soldiers on the northwest destroyed the buffer and came 80–100 kilometers closer to Moscow. The Party in Moscow and the State ran many public industries with employee organizations and promoted the building of fortifications to protect the city on all sides.

Several months passed, and Hitler's fascist attacks and the work of the enemy were ever more intense and widely dispersed. Now and again a bomber penetrated the night darkness, often with 100 or 250 kilogram bombs, which were dropped without clear targets. Moreover, many fire bombs were dropped which could burst into flames. At night some office workers used a tarpaulin glove to handle the bombs, some of which were ignited using big iron pincers or long iron shears, and some of the bombs were buried in sand. All of these measures were taken to prevent both the public buildings and housing from being set on fire. In addition, the military stood watches for further protection.

The Communist Party, with its more than 100,000 members, organized workers to protect Moscow and its population. 260,000 young Party workers went, of their own free will, to the front, and the people of Moscow voluntarily formed into detachments of 120,000 under the leaders of rank to protect Moscow, and inside the city the workers were organized into communist work groups. At this time, the Committee of National Defense decided that the diplomatic corps should be moved outside of Moscow to

Kubishchev by October 2nd. By this decision Comrade F. F. Molochkov, from the Protocol Department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reported that to ensure the safety of the diplomatic corps we would be moved. Preparations were being made for us in Kubishchev and with this news, the members of the diplomatic corps had little time to prepare themselves since they had to be ready at the station by seven that evening when a passenger train would be taking them to Kubishchev.

In the meantime, the workers in the Embassy packed the official belongings, and I wired a report of the situation to my government. At the appointed time we arrived at the Yaroslav train station, over which the enemy planes periodically flew and fired. We were distressed as we left Moscow to travel to Kubishchev, but we had to honor the decision of the Soviet government, and along our route many Soviet fighter planes protected us. Just before our departure, enemy bombers dropped a 1000 kilogram bomb near our embassy building, which exploded in waves near us, breaking into ruins metal roofs and walls as if they were made of wool. But we were not afraid of these bombs, and they didn't prevent us from convening meetings of the party cells. Thus it was inevitable that the power of the huge Soviet army would defeat—in spite of these destroyed dwellings—the Hitler fascists, and we were sure that we would hold a meeting to remember and talk about these emotional times when victory came.

After a four day journey, the members of the Moscow diplomatic corps arrived in Kubishchev, where we were directed in a friendly manner with the other Mongolians along with the Tuvan and other embassies, with small staffs, to the Grand Hotel where we were quartered. The other embassies with large staffs were lodged in other buildings. In Kubishchev city, the attacks of Hitler were far away, so it was possible for us in the evening to read peacefully by electric light and listen to the press and radio as well as carry out all our duties.

Although Moscow and Leningrad competed as cities during serious wartime, our students who studied in Moscow and Leningrad worked shoulder to shoulder as younger brother to older brother with all the Soviet people, digging protective trenches and especially wide anti-tank channels, working as night sentries, and extinguishing fire bombs and the fire from these bombs. In this serious time of war, I thought well of the Soviet and Mongolian people who detested this war and worked together as comrades in activities that smashed the enemy.

Of those studying in Moscow, our Mongolian students at the Far East Institute, the students from Mongolian Tuva, and their teachers were sent by railroad to Ferghana<sup>1</sup> to continue their studies.

Our students who moved to Central Asia continued their contribution and worked diligently mowing the grass, bringing in the harvest, and fix-

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1. In the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic in Central Asia and quite a distance from the front.

ing the back roads. They were recognized by the local administration and were evaluated with distinction and were repeatedly awarded several flags (i.e. medals). The group always over fulfilled the norm, without pay and in so doing helped everyone at the front. Thus while the Soviets were pushing back the German fascists who were attacking the public, our students, including Bagaa, Bars, Jagvaal, Tuvan, Tserenjav, Dashtseren, and Dovdon, continued to study and learn and, at the same time, supported the people.

At this time, Hitler's butchers invaded and tried to capture the city of Moscow while the devoted generals, officers, and others in the military encouraged support by awarding medals like the star and the cross. When the Fascist military units came very near to Moscow, the brave Muscovite Red Military smashed Hitler's army and forced its retreat. And these very brave soldiers in the Soviet Red Army who had protected the city of Tula now had to protect and keep the boundary lines of Moscow.

On the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Moscow Soviet of Workers' Deputies and the Moscow Communist Party and many public organizations had a warm and welcoming meeting in the Mayakovskii metro station. At this meeting, I. V. Stalin, the leader of the National Committee of Defense, said that the German Fascists had been smashed and the Soviet people and our great Motherland had proven they could inevitably win this righteous fight, and they had great confidence in this victory.

The day after the 7th of November, the Red Army had its traditional parade in Red Square which was quite different from parades in peacetime, and the fully armed soldiers went directly to the front from Red Square. There was a nice ceremony in Moscow while, in the air, several hundred fascist German planes attacked, although five hundred brave Soviet fighter planes prevented the destruction of the city. The military parade showed to the world the great strength of the Soviet people, and their staunchly and boldly held belief of victory in this war. The leading member of the National Committee of Defense and the Soviet Marshal K. E. Voroshilov gave us a warm welcome at the theatre in Kubishchev.<sup>2</sup> The day after the November 7th celebration military vehicles and workers were in a demonstration, and in the evening there was a State reception.

From the beginning, the Soviet people remained close to the great Party of Lenin and as the Motherland was being attacked and the Fascist butchers aimed their guns, the brave Soviet military never turned back from those wielding the sword, and I was proud of them. Everybody throughout the country in his own way, and without a moment's respite, burst forth with energy and hard work with no regard to his own life, and we were satisfied with the friendliness, co-operation, and awareness that in this difficult time of war everyone worked together as trusted friends. Of old, there had been passed on the hope of "Russia the Great," and it now appeared a very courageous idea.

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2. K. E. Voroshilov (1881–1969) was a Marshal and Commissar of the Ministry of Defense.

To give one or two examples, destroyed roads and new bridges over ditches or canals were built, communications were restored, and the industry of the city was secured and protected. Masters, engineers, and technical workers in each ward regularly met the demands for construction and produced there and then all the important products for this difficult struggle for the Motherland. At this time, the generals of Hitler's military command were north of Moscow, and to the south the Soviets tried to strike and secure the front by force.

On the 1st of December, Hitler's invading tanks were chased away from the fortifications in Moscow north to Naro-Fominsk, and part of the tank force was destroyed and was chased away. The brave Soviet soldiers on the 4th of December, 1941 heroically fought the enemy, smashing it to pieces, and this fierce fighting on the front line, which was the norm for Moscow, was also the last.

In this way, Soviet armed forces served well in their protection of Moscow and enabled it to be victorious as Hitler came closer. The Soviet Red military which had struggled to take back Moscow decided to smash Hitler's military in the central part of the area but did not manage to do that until January, 1942 when the Soviet military units advanced and pushed Hitler back 100-250 kilometers and struck the enemy to the west almost 400 kilometers, liberating several dozen towns and villages in the Moscow and Tula regions. The Soviet military dealt a serious blow to the Hitler fascist military and its storm troops. Protest movements developed in spite of Hitler's plans to pound and oppress people who struggled to be free in the Hitler-occupied countries of Poland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and France.

The Hitler fascists had a plan to join with their allies against the brave Soviet military and its allies to occupy Stalingrad, which developed into a huge battle in the city itself and the surrounding area. The brave and imperturbable Soviet military fought to the finish, surrounded the enemy, and attacked and beat them in a decisive battle of death and survival. The fascist General Field Marshal Paulus commanded the best German military units from the first month in 1943 until the end of the second month when they were completely destroyed. Stalingrad and its surroundings led to a great victory which created a basic change in the war for the Motherland so at this time Hitler's ability to capture victory was reversed. After driving Hitler from the besieged Volga-Terek area 600-700 kilometers north of Leningrad, it was set free.

The Soviet People's Red Army, together with many regions and cities, repeatedly freed the Motherland from the enemy and were victorious over the Fascists in Europe and liberated the people of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Austria, Denmark, and the Norwegian peninsula.

I received this good news on our embassy's radio and what was heard was clarified by what was known from the Soviet press. We whole heartedly admired and were grateful to the Soviet people with each success of the Soviet army in Moscow, Stalingrad, and Kursk, all of which led to higher morale.

## Examining a Firm Friendship in the Heat of an Historic Struggle

Our people were true and staunch friends with the Soviet Union, and the Presidium of the Central Committee, representatives of the Small Khural, and all the ministers of the government had a joint meeting and expressed their unity with the Soviets, with the intention that Hitler's fascism would be completely defeated. The MPRP tirelessly offered emotional and material help with that clear goal in mind. To this end, meetings were held in every corner of our country, and the activity of our people to fight with the Soviet Red Army against the enemy burst forth and a voluntary gift fund was initiated. Our ambassador to the Embassy transmitted this news to the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Lozovski.

The Embassy, before it moved to Kubishchev city, gave its truck and car to the units of the Red Army in the rear, which left it with only one ZUC-110 car. In addition, the staff of the trade representatives had to manage some of this work while economizing on the costs.

The Soviet people and its Red military had to bear the burden of Hitler's fascism in isolation. The times were difficult as the Soviet government and the Mongolian people fought fiercely to protect the Motherland and their way of life. Special attention was paid to living conditions and even though times were difficult, the Soviet government did not stop supplying Mongolia with low price goods. In addition, the Soviets covered the costs of those students who studied in the Soviet Union where the tuition was in the tens of thousands of rubles. Moreover, on October 5, 1942 our National University was built with the help of Soviet equipment and special technicians so that many students were able to receive an education in the central Motherland and many newly invigorated professionals appeared and took this road to opportunity.

On the other hand, a meat plant was started in 1942 and, as everyone knew, began operating in July, 1946 with little fanfare.

In our Motherland the burden of the war was evident, and our government decreased its orders from the Soviet Union for cars. An initiative was proposed to economize on fuel and gas, and it was important that each drop of benzene was saved for the front. Likewise the Mongolian people presented help to the Soviet military by organizing a broad movement to provide donations and gifts, and a resolution by the MPRP Central Committee established a ministerial commission on September 9, 1941.

As a gift from the Mongolian people, about one hundred railroad cars were loaded to go near Moscow with supplies for the intense battles involving the Soviet army at the front, and these arrived on the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Great October Revolution. This gift caravan included 15,000 military short sheepskin *deels*; felt boots; warm gloves; warm jackets; wolf, fox, and goat skins to make into warm clothing for airmen; horse hide belts and bags; sheep, cow and antelope meat; fat, butter, and foreign spirits. Gifts came from the old, the sick, the youth and Pioneers, and some women offered gifts and letters to those at the front.

The MPRP Central Committee made the decision to deliver the gifts and included in the group was the first Deputy to the Prime Minister, Comrade S. Lovsan, the Secretary of the Party Central Committee Janzma, the wife of Sükhbaatar, leader of the troops from the headquarters of the Battle of the Khalkh River Comrade P. Shagdarsüren, the good herdsman Puntsag, the partisan Damba, Melnikov, the woman Basan, the writer L. Tsend-Ochir, the attaché Filippov and me, the Ambassador, were all included. On February 12, 1942 representatives left Ulaan Baatar passing through Novosibirsk, and I with my translator Comrade Ilyin together with Latishev from the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Far East went by train from Kubishchev, and then we arrived in Moscow. Before going to the Western front, our representatives were greeted warmly by the Soviet Foreign Ministry officials and logistical military leaders of the Western front.

Our representatives were temporarily accommodated in the Metropol Hotel, and the comrades informed us that the Red military had pushed back the German Fascists near Moscow, and many industries were transformed into military weapons production factories making military vehicles, armored tanks, and cannons under the banner of "All to the Front." The ordinary people and the youth were located at the rear of the front, speeding up the reconstruction of the roads and bridges, as well as organizing partisan units which played an important role in the victory of the Russian army.

We were received with warm respect as comrades by the Soviet Party and government and, during these difficult times, bringing the gifts showed our gratitude. The MPRP, the government, and the Mongolian people were then

congratulated. Our representatives went on the first morning in March to the headquarters of the Western front with the front commander Marshal G.K. Zhukov<sup>1</sup> of the Russian Federation and the leader Sh. S. Khokhlov and the national military and government leader Makarov who, with others, greeted us warmly and said:

"The Soviet people will surely destroy our common enemy, Hitler's fascism. Mongolia and the Soviet Union together both have one enemy, and we will anticipate if this enemy attacks Mongolia, and—as in the past—we will defend your country."

Comrade G. K. Zhukov made our representatives acquainted with the situation on the front using a map. After that, Comrade G. K. Zhukov was handed over letters of greetings by our representatives for the people of Mongolia. Comrade G. K. Zhukov and other comrades hosted our representatives, and then there was a special concert at the club. Thus our representatives returned to Moscow and on March 2 went to the city of Istra Volokolamsk located more than 120 kilometers distant from Moscow where the German military had occupied the area, but where now the Red Army had returned and taken back from Germany the city of Istra Volokolamsk, and on the way we saw many broken vehicles and the remains of armored tanks. The Fascists had set fire to and blown up the city's buildings, and some had people inside which one saw with one's own eyes and which caused much distress.

Our representatives from Moscow went more than 200 kilometers to the headquarters of the 49th army which was located with a General in a small village, and the officers greeted us and acquainted us with a fascinating account of the battle. The army leader came to the Mongolian representatives, having heard about the victory at the thirteen road junctions, which had been freed. The good news focused on the emancipation the previous night from the enemy which had been concentrated in Iukhnov city and was celebrated by Commander Lt. General I. G. Zakharin.

We went to the first cannon regiment located three kilometers from the firing line and presented the gifts from the Mongolian people to its commander and soldiers. Then we wrote on the barrel of a cannon "from the Mongolian representatives." The cannon was then fired causing serious damage to the enemy. Then we returned to the 49th Army headquarters where the gift from the government was a felt *ger*, which was set up. While we worked, enemy planes bombed now and again, but our representatives carried out the assignments of our Party, our government, and our people with honor.

In January, 1942, the MPRP Small Khural had the twenty-fifth meeting of the Mongolian Revolutionary State, which decided to create a tank column called "Revolutionary Mongolia" and present it to the heroic Soviet army.

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1. Georgy Zhukov (1896–1974) was a Marshal who liberated much of Eastern Europe and was the most decorated army officer in Soviet history.

Our people warmly supported this decision and the victory over our common enemy—Hitler's fascists—became the noble goal of the State which had decided to create a tank column, for which money had been voluntarily collected. In 1943, the MPRP Small Khural had its twenty-sixth meeting in which the Mongolian people, by their effort and money, decided to donate and supply the Red Army with a squadron of planes.

Thus the highest State authority repeatedly made decisions at the meetings which were warmly supported by the Mongolian people, and a great movement developed which I made known to Comrade Latishev, the leader of the Far Eastern Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This information was passed on to the Soviet government, and we received their grateful answer.

The Central Committee of the MPRP and the Ministry of the Mongolian People's Republic decided that on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution that the Mongolian people would load 236 railroad cars in 4 columns and send them, as a gift, to the Soviet Red Army at the front to be delivered by Marshal Choibalsan, the leading representative from Ulaan Baatar, on November 27, 1942. On December 6th Comrade Latishev and Secretary Comrade Toka from the Central Committee of the Tuvan People's Republic, and some other people arrived from the Far Eastern Department of the Soviet Ministry to greet this column. Marshal Choibalsan, the leading representative, went to a special hotel as other representatives were occupying the Metropol hotel. On December 11, the leading Mongolian representatives, Marshal Choibalsan, with the other members Bumtsen, Surenjav, and Mijid, and Soviet Marshal Zhukov talked in a very friendly manner, and our representatives became acquainted with the military front line and talked about the enemy's strategy using a map.

Then the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and the Secretary of the Moscow regional committee, Comrade A. S. Shcherbakov, talked about how the gift from the Mongolian people which had arrived in the four columns of railroad cars should be divided among the various fronts and decided:

1. Column led by Marshal Choibalsan to the Western front;
2. Column led by Bumtsen to the Kalinin front;
3. Column led by Surenjav to the Northwestern front;
4. Column led by Mijid to the Leningrad-Volkhov front.

From December 11–12, they all decided to divide up this gift among the four columns, all of which were setting out for the front.

On December 12, 1942 Marshal Choibalsan presented the column and conferred with among others representatives including: Comrade N. V. Tsapkin, Partisan Togtokh, National Hero Gongor, female herder Ianjinlkham,

Ambassador Sambuu, and Tsagaani Tsevegmid, together with the ambassadors who were outside the country, and they met with the commanders and soldiers of the Western front led by I. A. Ivanov and others—10 people in all including the Marshal of the Western front I. S. Konnev and V. D. Sokolovskii, who would lead army units. This group met with soldiers at the front, and they expressed their gratitude to the Mongolian people for the gifts sent to them. Marshal Choibalsan, as the representative of the Mongolian people, gave the Star medal to Commanders V. D. Sokolovskii and P. I. Khokhlov. Then we visited the village and the area liberated from the enemy and having seen with our own eyes the destruction and the ruin of their industry, we had even greater hatred for the enemy.

While on the Western front, our representatives were met by General I. V. Boldin, who said that to capture enemy "spies" one had to attack from the enemy's southern flank. It was advantageous to know the power of the enemy's fortification so our friends agreed to meet since they were interested in these "spies." Our representatives agreed that in this small locality several German soldiers had appeared with their faces, noses, and cheeks frozen and their clothing doubled under their woolen coats and knitted, poor, thin boots. Our representatives asked them about the benefits of such fighting and were answered that soldiers are commanded to mobilize and go to the front. If they violate this command, there is a rule for shooting. The captured German soldiers said that since they were taken by the Russian military, they would not be affected by the cold, and could rest in a warm room and eat good food.

From there our representative delegation of the best division went to the battle line where a tank brigade arrived. Help came from the Mongolian people in the form of many gifts, and congratulations were issued. After that, our representatives went to many places and met with the military units, wishing them success and victory in battle. The Mongolian gift was handed over, and the government and Star medals were awarded together. The military leaders came together and became acquainted with the horse guard squadron of which, as history mentions, in 1917 the hero G. I. Kottovski defended the population against the enemy. The Mongolian people gave to this horse squadron many small horses which were able to withstand the cold, could almost go without food, could pasture themselves, and could go for long distances seldom becoming tired. One liked to see these horses performing military drill. Then our government representative gave this horse squadron a red flag.

On December 18, the Mongolian representatives went to the leading defensive units at the front and opened fire from the katusha guns against the Fascist enemy. All of this action was reported to Marshal Choibalsan. Later our representatives were received, in a friendly fashion, by the commanders of the Western front: Marshal I. N. Konev, military council member N. A.

Bulganin, General V. D. Sokolovskii, General P. I. Khokhlov, and General Makarov.<sup>2</sup> Marshal Choibalsan warmly thanked the generals and awarded Star medals to the best riflemen and the scouts in the army and wished everyone a quick victory over the enemy. Comrade Sokolovskii awarded Marshal Choibalsan an honored military guard status and the badge of the guard, and other representatives were given all sorts of mementos as gifts representing the friendly meeting between the Soviet and Mongolian people. Then the representatives led by Marshal Choibalsan left for Moscow.

The representatives who went to the Kalinin front included Comrade Bumtsen, the leader of the Mongolian Peoples' Small Khural, Ts. Damdin-süren, the editor of the newspaper *Unen* or "Truth," the Töv aimag leader Luvsangombo, the Bayan-Olgii deputy leader Khashgambai, Pozniakov, the leader of the Council responsible for the self-governing areas, and the well-qualified doctor from Arkhangai *aimag* center Dr. Batanov. Then the representatives of the Mongolian people accompanied a gift convoy to the Kalinin front. From December 10–22, 1942, we delivered our gifts and were warmly greeted by soldiers, leaders, and state employees.

Going to the front, our representatives went along the road to Kalinin through the surrounding cities of Kholm and Veliki Luk, where one saw the harm and destruction the enemy had caused. Later our representatives marveled at the great resources invested in the reconstruction. The destruction from the Fascist aggressors was seen throughout Kholm city where our representatives went to the place of the second squadron company where the battle patrol was located with its squadron leader, Major General Kudriatsev, who responded with a friendly greeting and a briefing on the situation at the front.

Our representatives became familiar with the heroic struggle of the 35th artillery regiment, the division named after General Panfilov, which produced twenty-eight heroes and who then went on to the Soviet countryside to defend Moscow in a battle against the enemy, breaking up the fifty-two tanks of the aggressor.

During the war in 1941 in the city of Alma-Ata in Kazakhstan, I. V. Panfilov was appointed as the leader to organize the Chapaev division. Many heroes fought a defensive battle near Moscow for several days against the enemy's weapons, and the outstanding Red military, as history has told us, had great success in this battle, which I. V. Panfilov spoke about. This division was given the Red Banner of the MPRP Central Committee by our representatives.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Ivan Konev (1897–1973), a military leader who, with Zhukov, captured the city of Berlin in 1945. Nikolai Bulganin (1895–1975), a Colonel General who was not in the front lines during World War II but eventually became Minister of Defense after Stalin's death and was initially allied with Nikita Khrushchev.

3. I. V. Panfilov (1893–1941) was head of the Rifle Division during this time. Chapaev refers to Vasily Chapaev (1887–1919), a great hero of the Bolshevik revolution.

Thus our representatives became acquainted with many squadrons of armored tank units, the mortar division, the airplane unit, the signal unit, and with important technical workers though, ultimately, the gift and letters were given to those on the Kalinin front, whom the military leader considered the most deserving. The leader of the Eighth Guard Unit was awarded the Star medal which was given by the Mongolian People's Republic General Demberel Tseren to Kudriatsev and 23 others who had fought at the Battle of the Khalkh River, in which Demberel Tseren had also fought. Then the leading representative Comrade Bumtsen went to Moscow on December 22.

The MPRP Central Committee Party Secretary Sürenjav, the Secretary from the Dornogov *aimag* Party Committee Choidog, the woman herder Tsevegmid from Dundgov *aimag*, the Party cell Secretary Tserenjav from Tsagaan Uur *sum*, Khövsgöl *aimag*, the leader of the military regiment Odsüren, the intellectual scholar Badarch, the instructor from the Party Central Committee D. I. Sidorov, and ten others participated in the convoy to the western front. From December 11–24, representatives dispatched gifts to the squadron from the Mongolian people and went to the headquarters at the front. The lieutenant general V. N. Bogatkin, a member of the Soviet military and the deputy leader of the government, greeted us warmly and explained in detail the situation at the front.

The representatives went with the 17th army command whose commander was Lieutenant General P. A. Kurochkin.<sup>4</sup> The army went along the road where the enemy with its hateful power had damaged cities and villages, and we learned about the light machine gun, the huge bullets, and the heavily armed tanks. Later, they visited the cannon division commanded by the Soviet hero Chaiulov who also commanded the mortar gun class of katushas and the airplane division. Then they were welcomed and accompanied to the headquarters and the military hospital, where State workers and more than one thousand soldiers and leaders had been selected to hand out gifts from the Mongolian people. Apart from this, there were meetings with the three ground troop divisions and their commander, General Lapkin, who was also in charge of the cannon regiments and the hospital, and was given more than two thousand gifts and letters.

The Mongolian government offered the Red banner to a voluntarily organized senior communist division. With the permission of Marshal Choibalsan, I communicated with Marshal S. K. Timoshenko from the Soviet Defense Ministry and arranged the award of the Star medals to some officers, soldiers, and workers. This award, which included the Red Flag and star medals, was granted to Lieutenant General Bogatkin who fought with the Mongolian People's Volunteer Army of 1921 against Baron Ungern.

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4. Pavel Kurochkin (1900–1989) was the Commander of the First Army Group in Mongolia and then Commander of the Seventeenth Army Group also in Mongolia.

On the Northwestern front, the army commanders wished to express their sincere pleasure with and gratitude to the Mongolian people and to their party and government leaders, including Choibalsan, Tsedenbal, and Bumtsen. In the direction of Leningrad and the Volkhov front, Mijid, the commander of the volunteer Mongolian mounted force, with the personnel led by Togmid, the Secretary of the Dornod *aimag* party committee, the good woman Tsevel, the leader of the Khiazgar military headquarters Sunrev, and with seven other people went to the Leningrad-Volkhov front. The Mongolian people dispatched a gift convoy from December 12 until December 21, 1942 to the headquarters of General Mijikov at the front. The Mongolian people and their representatives were warmly thanked and were extensively and clearly informed by our comrades about the situation on the front and about the communications unit, the infantry division, the armored tank unit, and the large cannon unit. The Mongolian people sent to the outstanding leaders and soldiers in all these units at the front the Star medal, which was a special badge of honor.

Later representatives from the State warmly thanked, in the name of the Mongolian people, the Red Army which had defeated the fascist enemy butchers and opened the happy road to victory. Similarly, the leader of the Red Army and the soldiers in this difficult year of the war celebrated the material help given by the Mongolian people in response to this destructive war. At this meeting on the front, the armored regiments were given the Red banner by the Mongolian government.

Our representatives, from December 20–24, 1942, brought gifts to all four compass points of the front and then went on to Moscow. Marshal Choibalsan, the leading Mongolian representative in Moscow, transferred the organization of the work and property of the so-called "Revolutionary Mongolia" tank brigade to V.M. Molotov, Commissar of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On January 12, 1943 not too far from Moscow in a hidden forest, Marshal Choibalsan and a delegation arrived and saw the tank brigade with the MPRP insignia. Each tank was almost full, and the armored troops pleasantly greeted the State brigades of Marshal Choibalsan and deputy lieutenant Colonel Slonov. They hailed Marshal Choibalsan while the Mongolian tank regiment was ready to accept the transfer. Our representatives went to greet each tank and armored brigade. The first tank brigade received a flag adorned with "Long Live the friendship between Mongolia and the Soviet Union." The second tank flew the flag of "Revolutionary Mongolia" the third tank flew the flag "The Central Committee of the MPRP" the fourth flew the flag of "The Presidium of the Small Khural of the MPRP" the fifth tank flew the banner of the "MPRP Embassies Council" the sixth flew that of "The Central Committee of the Mongolian Revolutionary Youth League" the seventh tank flew the "Mongolian Trade Union Central Council" flag,

the eighth tank sported the flag of "The Mongolian Women's Council" the ninth flew the banner of "The Mongolian Pioneers" and finally the Ulaan Baatar tank had the names from the 18th *aimag* written on it including Magsarjav,<sup>5</sup> Choibalsan, and Bumtsen.

Thus fifty-six tanks went in a line formation in front of our representatives. A platform had been prepared on which the leader of the tank brigade, Colonel Leonov, warmly greeted the representatives from the MPRP, the Mongolian State, and the Mongolian people. Our representative Marshal Choibalsan greeted the tank brigade and the leaders, and the officers and the soldiers heard sincere and warm words for the workers, herders, and intellectuals who had built the wealth of "Revolutionary Mongolia" The tank column was transferred and in the process farewells were said with a demonstration of lifelong friendship. Thus the Mongolian people won the battle for independence on the day they united with the Soviet military regiments. Our life was difficult until we were helped by this united force, which won many historic battles, and this help will be cherished forever. Until the end of this sacred war, the Soviet Motherland which had been attacked by Hitler's fascists the tank brigade was to be fully provided with provisions and supplies from us.

Ah, those dear armored brigades!

In this battle, these tanks should be driven bravely and become an eternal monument to commemorate this history! The soldiers replied that the tanks would be used to destroy the fascist enemy, and they were prepared to break up the enemy and win a victory. After this, the tank brigade made a spectacular demonstration in front of the platform of "Revolutionary Mongolia."

On February 2, 1943, Marshal Choibalsan, our representative, and all other personnel were received in the Kremlin Palace by the Soviet federal state party and the government leaders. General Commander Comrade I. V. Stalin valued highly the idea of a contribution of material help from the Mongolian people in the battle against the strength of the German fascists. It was stressed that in difficult times for the Soviet and Mongolian people "a friend in need was a friend indeed" and there was help given. Glasses were raised to the Mongolian people who were warmly greeted. Our representative and leader Marshal Choibalsan worked to promote and strengthen a friendly relationship between Mongolia and the Soviet Union, like that between a younger and an elder brother.

Our government had to strengthen and protect the independence of the Motherland, and Stalin paid close attention to all of this like a concerned father. He toasted our party, our government, and our people. He greeted

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5. Khatanbaatar Magsarjav (1877–1927), a Minister of the Army involved in the defeat of Baron Ungern Sternberg, the bizarre and murderous commander who briefly occupied the Mongolian capital in 1921.



**Figure 14.1. Statue of K. Choibalsan in front of the National Mongolian University.**

us warmly with kind words, wished us good health, and in a soft voice, said that people are mortal but friendship was eternal and to this we all raised our glasses. V. M. Molotov from the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs greeted Marshal Choibalsan kindly and noted how our mother country had attacked the brutal German fascists. In these difficult times he toasted the

friendship between the Soviet Union and Mongolia, which had grown even stronger like that between two brothers.

Comrade Stalin, on behalf of V. M. Molotov who managed much more important work than being in charge of several battalions, toasted our foreign relations. Comrade Bumtsen toasted M. I. Kalinin, the honored Chair of the highest Soviet Presidium.

Earlier Comrade I. V. Stalin and Comrade G. K. Zhukov had seized and throttled a Japanese general who had attacked them.<sup>6</sup> Now this young general Zhukov was toasted for his quick defeat of the fascist Germans. Our party representatives warmly toasted the heroic Soviet people, the Party, the government leader, and the famous Red army general.

Then Comrade Mijid greeted dear Comrade Stalin and the government leaders on behalf of our 70,000 voluntary mounted detachments, and Comrade I. V. Stalin asked if there was real organization among the horse detachments and if they were ready. Comrade Mijid responded that they were ready.

Comrade I. V. Stalin and Comrade A. I. Mikoyan couldn't stop toasting us and our work in foreign trade at this important time, and the close relations with the Mongols were noted. This very warm and friendly meeting took a long time. Actually the meeting with Stalin could be characterized as quite talkative and Stalin's character was quite impressive. He spoke softly and was able to analyze an issue from different angles simultaneously and evaluated the various factors with prompt answers as the basis for consideration.

Besides the meeting, it was clearly explained to our representatives how the German military was smashed and the two cities of Stalingrad and Leningrad were freed. The heroic Soviet people and the victorious Red Army won a victory over the fascist Germans, and our country's herders contributed to it with the best 10,000 horses which were voluntarily prepared for the front.

On March 23, 1943, the Mongolian people sent 127 wagons to the western front which were met by Comrade Latishev, from the Far Eastern department of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representatives of the western front, and me. Thus our representatives were divided into two groups, and the first group with the leading representative Yu. Tsedenbal went in the direction of central Leningrad and the Western front. It was made up of the party secretary Damba and the leading representative, Yu. Tsedenbal, the distinguished deputy Serayter, the corps commander Dorj, the armored brigade Commissar Bataa, the deputy of the government frontier post Lkhamsüren, the leader of the great gun regiment

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6. This refers to the Battle of the Khalkh River (or, known to the Japanese, as the battle of Nomonhan) when a combined Soviet and Mongolian force defeated the Japanese in late 1939 and ended the Japanese threat to Mongolia.

Chultern, the Party Central Committee counselor Yu. K. Prikhodov, the partisan Demchig, the distinguished herder Avirmid, the Soviet subject Kartaiev, and the intellectual representative Tömör-Ochir.<sup>7</sup> We became acquainted with the situation along the road to the Tula region and beyond the Western front. Our representatives went to the sixty-first army and were met by the army commander lieutenant general P. A. Belov, a member of the military council, and Major General Dubrovski, who warmly welcomed them and acquainted me with the success of the victorious army. Afterwards, there was a meeting of the military, the leader, and many comrades at the front, and the gifts of the Mongolian people were handed over.

On March 25, our representatives led by Comrade Yu. Tsedenbal visited the sixty-first army with its 342-356 divisions and the sixth artillery regiment of the army, went on to army headquarters, and met with about 180 heroes, to express warm thanks. The Star medals of the Mongolian people were awarded as well as medals of victory at the Khalkh River. Later, our leading representative, Comrade Yu. Tsedenbal, went in the direction of Viazma on the front, and toward the headquarters of the twentieth army for a meeting of the members of the Soviet military, including Major General Lazov, the Deputy Army Commander, and Major General Ermakov,<sup>8</sup> who directed people in a friendly meeting and told about the victory in the battle. Later, the one hundred and fourth Federal Regiment and the Artillery Guard regiment visited with their large guns, and these selected soldiers were given gifts.

Our representatives received guard awards, and the guard regiment and the rear army worked together in holding a splendid meeting celebrating the friendship between the Soviet Union and Mongolia, which was a clear demonstration of celebration and thanks. Then they returned to the city of Viazma, which had been freed, and they saw the work of the heroes who were reconstructing the city. Gifts were issued to them and afterwards they went to the first bomber division and were met by the Red Military council member, the General, the division leaders, and our heroic pilot. All aimed to work for success.

The Deputy General of all the military and the Corps Commander J. Lkhagvasüren,<sup>9</sup> as well as the leading representatives including the Deputy

7. Daramyn Tömör Ochir (d. 1985), an important official who was purged by Yumjagiin Tsedenbal (1916–1991), the Premier of Mongolia and Head of the MPRP from 1952 to 1984, in a dispute reputedly about the evaluation of Chinggis Khan but really involved Mongolia's role in the Sino-Soviet dispute. Tsedenbal was himself removed in office by his Mongolian associates, with the help of the Soviet Union, in 1984. See Sh. Nadirov, *Tsedenbal and the Events of August, 1984* (trans. by Baasan Ragchaa; Bloomington: Mongolia Society Occasional Paper 25, 2005).

8. P. Ermakov (1884–1952), a Commissar involved in the killing of Tsar Nicholas II and his family after the Bolshevik Revolution.

9. Jamyangiin Lkhagvasüren (1912–1982) was a commander and hero in the battle of the Khalkh River (or, to the Japanese, Nomonhan) and was Minister of Defense from 1959–1969.

to the Prime Minister Lanjav, Minister Shagdarjav, Partisan Navan, the lesser leader Puntsag, the writer Sengey, the Soviet woman Kudrianova, the industrial shock worker Naimsüren, and Ambassador Sambuu accompanied the gift convoy to the Central Front on March 22, 1943. All representatives met with General Marshal K. K. Rokossovskii and were told about the beginning of the attack on the German fascists at Stalingrad and the successful victory.

On March 25, the first tank army of General M. E. Katukov, a military council, and the officers and soldiers met with Lieutenant General Pavlov and our representatives, and they were made acquainted with the situation on the front as well as with the equipment of the Mongolian people, and our army, which consisted of tanks like those named "Revolutionary Mongolian Nation" which had helped achieve success, battling the enemy tank brigade.<sup>10</sup>

The historic tank victory was explained in this way: On December 11, 1942, six hundred of Hitler's fascist tanks violently attacked with quite a number of planes. At that time, the Soviet army tank commander had only the power of sixty-four tanks, and the Internal Border Military Ministry was only one regiment. Thus, there was one war tank for every ten German tanks. It was difficult to maintain forces against the enemy tanks and withstand the enormous German power, as well as entering into a decisive battle to prevent them going on to Moscow. There was, however, fierce fighting and as a result of this defensive battle the enemy was defeated. One hundred and forty-four tanks were destroyed from the rear, and our fiftieth army battalion arrived, as we know from the accounts given. There was one interesting example from all of this from the tank driver Lipushinskii who told of setting fire to fourteen enemy tanks by himself after his was destroyed. Later our representatives, along with Comrade M. E. Katukov, Commander of the tank army, went to the Mongolian tank brigade of the head colonel Comrade Leonov, who was an old acquaintance and who greeted us in a friendly manner as our Mongolian people issued their gifts. At this meeting, the tank brigade stressed: "We completely freed the cities of Kharkhov and Belgorod, and the Mongolian people are trusted after performing these brave historical feats." Our representative to the twenty first army under General I. M. Chistiakov, the leading member of the military council, and an officer and a soldier all met in a grand victory meeting, and the gifts were issued and tales were told of the battle at the front. Never-ending friendship was promoted between the Soviet and the Mongolian

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10. Konstantin Rokossovski (1896–1963), Polish-born Marshal of the Soviet army, who was arrested and tortured during the 1930s purges in the USSR but was released and played a key role in the defeat of the Nazis. After the War, he became Minister of National Defense in Poland. Mikhail Katukov (1900–1979) was head of the First Guards Tank Army which defeated the German tank divisions in World War II.

people, like that between an older and a younger brother. All were pleased with these fresh and honest events, and they were celebrated as each guard was awarded a badge.

After that our representatives waited for comrade Army Commander M. E. Katukov and congratulated him and the so-called "Revolutionary Mongolia" tank brigade, which freed Berdichev from the enemy with ten of the tiger tanks, twenty-five cannons, and more than thirty mortars all of which—as our representatives knew—were used for destruction. From there, our representatives met and welcomed all the tank brigades together and awarded the Red Star flag to all from the People's Republic of Mongolia.

Hence both delegations joined in Moscow, and the leader Comrade Yu. Tsedenbal, and some other representatives met with the Soviet leaders and Party comrades and other responsible people who were briefed on all events, and many short and long term issues were discussed clearly and in a friendly manner, and then they returned to the Mother country.

The airplane brigade, under the sponsorship of the Central Committee of the MPRP and the Ministers of the Mongolian Republic Council, was called "The Mongolian People" since the Mongolians were its sponsors, and they were responsible for the food and equipment. The workers sent many, many letters of gratitude to the people of Mongolia. The Red Star flag airplane destroyer battalion was called "The Mongolian People" and included in the squadron the agent Comrade Shimakin and the Soviet heroes Pushkin and Maiorov, both of whom I admired. They were awarded, by the Mongolian people, the military honor of the Red Star flag. Thus the soldier and the leader who had built this superior and honored tank brigade had earned more than four star medals from their Mongolian comrades. And for this, the army General N. I. Batutin was also honored with the Red Star flag.

The Central Committee of the MPRP and the government of the people of Mongolia in December, 1944 fought in the socialist Republic of the Ukraine on the Western front, which was the first front in the brave fight against Hitler's fascists. The tank brigade called "Revolutionary Mongolia" and the flight squadron called "The Mongolian People" had devoted to them the first one hundred and sixteen wagons of the gift column to the tank brigade, which was given by the Deputy Ambassador Lamjav, Chair of the Federal Co-operative Majid, Minister of Industry Gombojav, Minister of Trade Luvsanjamian, Brigade Commander Osor, Ministry of Oil leader Baljinyam, intellectual representative Zagvaral, and Mikler who advised the representatives of the Mongolian people who fought in the Ukraine. The gifts were to be divided up among the Soviet Red Army warriors, the tank brigade called "Revolutionary Mongolia," and the air squadron called "The Mongolian People" so relations would be strengthened and all would be joined as brothers.

The leader of the Central Committee of the MPRP and the government decided in December, 1945 to support the tank brigade called "Revolutionary Mongolia," and the air squadron with the heroic soldiers from the Motherland whose victory completely freed the second front in the Ukraine from the enemy. To celebrate all of these events, all of the one hundred and twenty seven wagon gift convoys were handed over by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the MPRP Yanjmaa, Ambassador Sambuu, Minister of Transportation Namsrai, and trade representative Tsagandorj who handled the matter.<sup>11</sup>

I spoke to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and we decided that representatives of the tank brigade "Revolutionary Mongolia" and the air squadron "The Mongolian People" should be invited to Moscow and handed over this gift of one hundred and twenty seven wagons to these representatives. In Moscow it was alright to talk about this gift, which was a manifestation of the firm bond between the Mongolian and Soviet peoples, like that between a younger and an older brother.

At this time in the world's progress, the brave and great heroes wiped out Hitler's fascists, their bitter enemy, from the Ukraine and Belarus. Our party, our government, and our laboring people had sent, on six occasions, seven hundred and twenty six wagons in gift convoys and almost eighty people participated in delivering them to the Red military that was on the firing line. We were as brothers and loyal comrades who stood out in all the pages of written history.

The brave warriors in the Soviet Red Army broke up, here and there, Hitler's fascists, and as a result our embassy was allowed by the Soviet Foreign Ministry in the beginning of August or September of 1943 to move from Kubishchev, and we arrived in Moscow where we settled down in our former permanent quarters which had been bombed. We organized the repairs in a short time under the jurisdiction of the diplomatic corps and worked to restore our customary routine, receiving material goods from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Similarly, our students and teachers from the Eastern University who together had moved to Ferghana returned to an old apartment building in Moscow, which was very cold and had little comfort and was in need of great repairs. Nevertheless, we struggled doggedly with the program of lessons while our embassy worked to make the building more hospitable. After the beginning of the war, many of our students now moved to other cities to study, and some of our students went back to Moscow to start their program of lessons at their old school. In addition, more of our students had available to them the possibility of entering a Soviet institution of higher education.

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11. Yanjmaa Sükhbaataryn (1893–1963) was the widow of Mongolia's Lenin, Sükhbaatar. She served in a number of government positions, including Chair of the Presidium for a brief period in 1953–1954. Sambuu succeeded her in that post.

By August, 1943, we Mongolians lacked guns and bullets and therefore requested these items, along with hunting rifles, from Soviet enterprises. We were told that we would have to appeal to a higher authority since the factories only made combat weaponry. Comrade Tsaagandorj and I corresponded with the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee's leading member, Ambassador A. I. Mikoyan of the Ministry of Foreign Trade who gave orders to ship the requested items in two weeks. He also said that the Soviet Union supported Mongolia's hunting activities since his army on the front lines enjoyed the furs sent to them.

1942 began with Hitler's German military deep inside the Soviet mother country with its aggressive military on the attack for the whole year in this fierce war. The allies, England and America, were hesitant about the opening of the second front, and they intended to smash Hitler's Germany without consulting with the Soviet Union on how to handle the attack. Thus it was not clear to us or to the world if the imperialist, capitalist system would be successful in establishing the second front. The gigantic power of the Red Army smashed Hitler's forces in a great and wondrous victory and as a result the many countries in Europe saw their situations change after being trampled by Hitler's military. As a result, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Finland, Norway, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia didn't hesitate to free themselves. The Soviet Red military and the people of these countries struggled to develop together a connection that would enable them to completely smash the German fascists. This victory pushed the union of America and England, which as a last resort opened in June, 1944 the second front in Western Europe.

Through the first and second seasons of 1945, the Soviet Red military won a mighty victory over fascist Germany and with its strong weapons made a last attack and surrounded the fascist military on the third front and took over Berlin. After May 2, 1945, the capital city of Berlin was captured, and the commander of the German military was surrounded, and he signed the surrender.

On June 24th, the Soviet People's Party had a huge, joyous celebration in Red Square to honor the great victory over Hitler's fascism for which the rest of the world had great respect. At this very exuberant demonstration the famous general from the Western Front and from inside the Soviet defense ministry, Marshal G. K. Zhukov, waited to greet the other very famous Marshal K. K. Rokossovski, also from the Western front, to give him the report.

The heroic Soviet people and their glorious army were victorious over Hitler, the fascist aggressor. This courageous struggle for the beloved Motherland together with the emancipation of Western Europe under the banner of pure internationalism was an historic victory, which was greeted by the words of G. K. Zhukov after the military demonstration by the leader of the Frunze Academy. After smashing Hitler's fascism, there was a fresh feeling

of freedom in the Motherland connected to the heroic Red Guard warriors who were victorious over the enemy. Many soldiers were very splendid as they paraded to the platform displaying a black banner with the sign of the German swastika stamped on it, and with great exhaustion they paraded throughout Red Square, which was crowded with hordes of people as jubilant cries continually resounded. After this, the horse squadron passed by, and giant technical weapons were shown as all saluted. Then the air became agitated as many kinds of airplanes flew over the demonstration, and many workers continued to parade.

While this big and joyous victory was being celebrated, I saw before my eyes the difficult times of terrifying fighting in this fascist war, and we recalled the promise I. V. Stalin had made that we would be victorious and celebrate in the streets. The entire world and its people were extremely excited, and their hearts were pounding. It became customary for workers in all the socialist countries to celebrate the anniversary of this historic victory.

Since April 13, 1941 the Soviet Union and Japan had set up a neutrality agreement. However, the Japanese imperialists not only helped Hitler's fascists who attacked deep into areas of the Soviet Union, but also in these difficult times built up a huge force in northeastern China (Manchuria) of about one million soldiers with more than five thousand large guns, a thousand tanks, almost fifteen hundred airplanes with weapons, and many thousand reconnaissance detachments. Thus, they were ready to open fire in battle against the Soviet and Mongolian troops when the time was right.

On the other hand, Japanese imperialists controlled northeastern China and many people of the Far East were now endangered by the Japanese attacks and suffered from death, ruin, poverty, and deprivation. In that regard, on August 10, 1945, the Mongolian government announced the war against Japan had been a just war in self defense for Mongolia, and this conclusion conformed to that of the Soviet Union.

Our People's Revolutionary military and the Soviet military joined like two brothers. From ancient times in the Far East, there were imperialist wars based on aggressors who threatened the independence of honest and peaceful people whom they captured, colonized, and enslaved. The conquerors inflicted suffering, deprivation, and disaster on those they oppressed, causing them to fight for their freedom and an end to war.

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## The End of the Harmful War and the Beginning of Peace Time

In the Crimea, the leaders of the allied powers held a conference, and at the request of the Soviet Union Outer Mongolia—the People's Republic of Mongolia—was accepted as a country independent from China. So the Soviet Union requested that the Guomindang government send its representative, Van Shi Tse (T.V. Soong) to Moscow to formalize this negotiation, and so in August, 1945 he met with the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs V. M. Molotov. The Mongolian people had gained their freedom and independence in their revolution, which reinforced their desire to work against the reactionary government of the Guomindang, which continued to regard Mongolia as its province. However, it was agreed that if a public poll supported independence for the People's Republic of Mongolia the Guomintang government would accept it, and the current border would be recognized as Mongolia. After stating this to the Guomindang, the current border between Mongolia and China was agreed upon, and Mongolia's Prime Minister, Marshal Choibalsan, was summoned to Moscow to definitely decide this question. Marshal Choibalsan received the invitation and was met at the Moscow airport by Comrade V. M. Molotov, the Party leader A. I. Mikoyan, and other party and government officials and the ambassadors from Bulgaria, Hungary, and Yugoslavia as well as Ambassador Sam-buu. They were also greeted by an honor guard with the Soviet-Mongolian flag and a parade of people outside. Then Marshal Choibalsan was escorted by these people right up to a hotel in Moscow.

The next day, V. M. Molotov met with Marshal Choibalsan and introduced the preliminary agreement to the Chinese representative so he could become acquainted with it and talk about the issues. Comrade I.V. Stalin received Marshal Choibalsan and before long he returned. In the meeting,

Marshal Choibalsan expressed heartfelt and warm greetings from his people and from himself. Following the agreement mentioned above, on September 9, 1945 the Presidium of the Small Khural of Mongolia made the decision that a plebiscite would be held on October 20, 1945.

The general public was bound together into one beloved party which was an unbeatable unit—like a single person—and patriotism and political consciousness were exhibited in the 100% voter turnout and in the celebration confirming independence. This open ballot was legitimate, as was reported by our government to the Soviet authorities. The official agreement with the Chinese government came into effect following these decisive results, and they were accepted as a neighbor so that on February 13, 1946 diplomatic relations were established with China. But the cruel Guomindang military authorities intended to attack, with their weapons, our country's frontiers time after time in the region of Baitag and along the southwestern borders of the country in Khovd *aimag*.

By 1949, the Chinese nation had been victorious over the harsh rule of the Guomindang. There had been a People's Revolution so that we had friendly relations with our neighbor, and diplomatic talks were established between the Mongolian People's Republic and the Chinese People's Republic, and in 1952 we worked together on economic and cultural cooperation agreements.

Since the war, workers and talented professionals in the Soviet Motherland had been careful to devote their energies to the great Communist Party of Lenin. The Soviet Union itself had been densely surrounded and destroyed by Hitler's fascist butchers, and many towns and villages had been ruined. However, in a short period of time these wounds were honorably swept away, as it began the immense task of rebuilding. For instance, with the large cities of Odessa and Minsk, there was the question of rebuilding them on their old historic foundations or constructing them in new places. But within a short time, splendid contemporary buildings and towers were built in the old areas. Many other cities and villages were built and restored with buildings which were comfortable, as well as beautiful places for culture.

Let me add—to make it perfectly clear—that Hitler's fascist military was a brutal group which smashed more than 1900 cities, destroyed valuable and rare things, and set fire to historical monuments. More than 70,000 villages and settlements, 32,000 surrounding industries and cultural areas, and 65,000 kilometers of railroad track and bridges were blown up, and 100,000 collectives, state farms, and machine tractor stations were destroyed.

Actually, during the difficult times of war, each person became infected with a passion for victory. Now everyone had the endurance necessary to work for the Motherland and in cities and in the countryside transport systems began working in every direction, electric lights began to function well, and the public was utterly delighted, and everyone set to work restoring the economic sys-

tem. An example of this is that simple families could communicate through the communication system, and stores and kiosks opened on the streets and in the squares, which sold the necessities of every day life. Many artistic and cultural places opened and offered entertainment to the public.

Generally, the summer of 1945 had plenty of rain, and it was a good time for crops so that people were calm. The horrible war was over, work was progressing, and all brothers enjoyed a time of rest and tranquility. In the fourth season, fall, of 1945, there were discussions about Soviet-Mongolian imports since for both countries and their people there was the need for goods, and it was important to try to satisfy this demand through trade. Decisions were made in a sincere and friendly manner relating to our need for equipment for passenger and transport cars and the Soviet demand for meat in some of their western regions, as were the efforts to implement these decisions and meet these demands. Before long, Mongolia and the Soviet Union organized a ten year treaty of mutual assistance.

That is to say, that the Prime Minister of Mongolia Marshal Choibalsan and the Secretary General of the Central Committee of the MPRP Yu. Tsedenbal went to Moscow to meet their comrades in the Soviet Party and arrange the implementation of the decisions regarding the economy and culture. After these discussions, the above agreement was signed on February 27, 1946.

In the friendship agreement protocol of 1936, the Soviet Union and Mongolia both agreed that if either country's territory was attacked by the enemy, both countries would measure the danger and work for victory. They would help each other in every way including military assistance, and this provision was restated in the new agreement. So after ten years the treaty had come to an end, and there was one year in which either party could rescind the agreement before it took effect for another decade.

Alongside the cultural and economic agreements between the Soviet Union and Mongolia, cultural events were organized, and all facets of our economy and our culture were promoted both on paper and in the decision to develop our cultural life for the benefit of our people. Marshal Choibalsan said this in Moscow:

The Soviet and Mongolian governments have worked out a mutual assistance pact for both economic and cultural work. It is a document of historic significance as was the 1921 victory of the People's Revolution for the Mongolian people. This treaty reinforced friendship with the Soviet people and further promoted a strong foundation as well as reinforcing the independence of Mongolia.

The powerful Soviet Red military beat Hitler's fascists and not only occupied but freed the European continent. In the Far East the aggressive

Japanese imperialists were conquered in this just war, and a great part of the Asian continent was freed. At the end of 1944, the People's Republics of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Albania followed the progressive road to independence and socialism. Similarly, the People's Republics of Korea, Vietnam, and China followed the path of the liberation movements and socialist development.

The result was that the Soviet Union and Mongolia were the first two countries in the socialist camp which had broadened into a world socialist system and formed an historic new union. Meanwhile the friendship between the Soviet Union and Mongolia—like that between a younger brother and an older brother—was consolidated, and my activities were greatly valued and honored by official decree from the Presidium of the Soviet Union with the Medal of Labor and the Red Five Star medal.

Also during my work as Ambassador, I was repeatedly honored by the Presidium of the Mongolian People's Small Khural and received two Red Star merit medals and one Golden Pole Star. Thus the strong Soviet-Mongolian friendship was consciously consolidated and strengthened forever.

In the beginning of the spring of 1946, there was a decision to relieve me of my post as Ambassador and to have me return to Mongolia. As a result, V. M. Molotov, the leader of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, gave me as a departing gift a new "pobeda" car and a golden bowl. I had many good friends in the Soviet Party, and close working relations were built with many Soviet comrades and personal friends, whom I had met and with whom I had established enduring relationships. At the leave-taking I expressed my appreciation and afterwards I left Moscow and went to Ulaan Baatar by plane. I met with Marshal Choibalsan who took into account that during a nine year period it had not been possible to have an official rest or holiday, and though he considered giving me a month's leave there was so much work to be done that I had only one week before my responsibilities began at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

After this rest period, I left my job as Ambassador and was appointed leader of the Far Eastern department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and went to work on the tasks for Marshal Choibalsan, which consisted of registering or recording all the damage suits incurred in the war with Japan. I worked closely on these embassy and state responsibilities with Comrade Toiv. These suits had to be studied in light of the law, and the irrefutable truth had to be presented to the state. To complete this task, Comrade Toiv and I studied the Japanese imperialists who from 1935 until the end of August, 1938 forcibly penetrated the southeastern border of Mongolia at Tamsagbulag, Bulanders, Adagdulaan, Bayantsagaan, Nomonkhan, and Burdnii *oboo* in the Khalkh region. In all these places, the damage from savage attacks had to be computed.

Besides all this work, at this time on the Western front a group of arrogant Chinese Guomindang, with reactionary ideas, crossed the frontier at the area around Baitag bogd, and from time to time went deep into Tsagaan gol and elsewhere. In connection with this, our government organized a commission to clarify the historical frontier line, and I worked with this commission and a committee from the Academy of Sciences. Comrade Tsevelin proved that the border of Baitag bogd ran along the summit of Tughaljin khar and Uzur tsagaan bulag, and it followed the path from Uzur ughzhin to the beginning of Tooroi bulag and the small Khavtaga mountain between Khokh aarag owoo to Takhin shar ridge to the western blue tier, then to the Ergu Khar ridge to Gobi khonin uus and from the western border up to the boundary line. In 1947, my commission was entrusted with the work of producing a report which proposed the clarification of the boundary line and which was to be completed by the summer of 1948. That is why six groups worked on producing the 46,727 kilometers boundary line with China. The northeastern boundary of Tarvag takh *oboo* and the northwestern part of Kharmagnai mountain pass, each noteworthy border *oboo*, had to be studied, and each boundary line had to be clarified with specific information.

To do this work, the People's Republic of Mongolia and the People's Republic of China had to officially decide to establish a joint commission to agree to sign and raise on each spot an official concrete delineation post. Afterwards the leaders of Mongolia and China officially settled the question of the boundary, which was mutually advantageous to both countries and was based on proletarian internationalism, mutuality of thought, equality and power. Each was friendly, as both sides selected representatives to a meeting in Beijing on December 26, 1962, where they signed the agreement.

In 1946, our foreign relations with Asian and European socialist countries began and were like those between a younger and an older brother as they developed and broadened. We followed a policy of neutrality and promoted friendly relations between them and the Central Committee of the MPRP and the government. I worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and studied and worked to implement and expand the economic and cultural development of these important relationships.

Along with this work in our government, I endeavored to increase my own knowledge and in my spare time I studied in the Party Institute affiliated with the Central Committee of the MPRP, from which I successfully graduated.

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## An Honorable Task for the People and the Country

The Mongolian government decided to appoint me the Ambassador to the People's Republic of Korea and gave me the task of setting up an embassy. In advance, there was work to prepare in connection with this embassy and at the end of July, 1950 the staff of the Embassy, along with their families, traveled by train to the border. With my family, I went to the border city of Shinju in the People's Republic of Korea where the representatives of the Protocol Department of the Korean Embassy awaited us. From there, as mutual friends, we jointly went to the capital city of Pyongyang and met with the Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pak Dun Tsu [?] <sup>1</sup> and other ambassadors. There I received a warm greeting from the leader. We stayed in the center of Pyongyang at a hotel which was temporary quarters and during this time we saw the American planes spying by air from time to time.

As Ambassador, it was desirable at the beginning to resend my credentials to the leader of the Presidium of the People's Assembly, which I requested in a hurry from the Protocol Department. At the fixed time that was both mutually suitable to my friends and also respectful of the propriety of protocol, I presented my credentials later to the leader of the Presidium of the Parliament. To celebrate, I received especially warm greetings, which promoted friendship between our two countries.

On the next day, the honored General Secretary of the Korean Labor Party's Central Committee and the Head of the Cabinet Marshal Kim Il-Song of the People's Republic of Korea received me. I transmitted the warm greetings of our Party and government leaders, and the answer from Kim Il-Song was that the People's Republic of Mongolia was like a brother and

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1. I have been unable to identify this figure.

that his country was in the midst of a serious war, and he was pleased to seat an experienced ambassador.

For the sake of uniting our Motherland and with 98% of the land now liberated from the American imperialists, the People's Free Militia smashed the American imperialist military.

But the threat of war did not end. We continued to respond to the danger from the American imperialists and their ally Syngman Rhee, a defector from his Motherland and a puppet of America and the obedient slave to the government of Japan, who in recent times had helped to bomb our railroad junctions and bridges, and communications and power stations. Our country was not alone since many other countries had such brotherly relationships at heart and helped, without hesitation, by giving material and moral support. We were against war, but this war was a just war and anyway the truth will win. So he finished his talk, and we said farewell to our friends.

Then I met the other ambassadors to the People's Republic of Korea and thus fulfilled my duties as part of the diplomatic corps. The Soviet Minister, Comrade Stigov, and the counselor Tunkin were old friends, and we had worked together in wartime when there was a union of close friends on whom one relied in those anxious times.<sup>2</sup>

At the end of August, 1950 the American imperialists began their air attacks, and each one was more intense than the last. Every day an airplane bombed time after time, and the bombing continued spraying ordinary citizens with machine gun fire. Pyongyang city and its communities' and people's associations organized daily communications to work on the danger and damage. They also took care of completing, during the night, the necessary work of moving to the north important industries and machinery so they could be protected. But the American imperialists and their allies had at their disposal the military weapon power of the sixteen states from two large continents, and they occupied the water access to the city behind the 38th parallel line in the direction of Pyongyang from where they could attack. At this time, the People's High Command made the key decision to move the official organization to the north during the night when there was little danger from the enemy.

In accordance with this decision, the ambassador from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the merchant representatives organized a place to move to and during the night this order was announced in secret. In accordance with this order, the Ministry had to register everything except the wooden furniture. All belongings had to be arranged in a car with everyone in my family. Then the car was loaded and along with the Hungarian and Czechoslovakian ambassadors, we traveled in a column in the dark of night, toward Shinju city, amid intermittent machine gun fire. The next day we continued

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2. Grigory Tunkin (1906–1993) was a prominent lawyer and specialist on international law. He also served as a diplomat, including as a Counselor in Pyongyang.

to travel though there was no let up from the machine guns and by night, we had reached Shinju. From there, with my family I went on to the Chinese city of Andon where we sent our things by train to Ulaan Baatar. People who lived in or near the city carried the lighter boxes in their hands for four days and by the decision of the North Korean Ministry moved to a village near the Supon station, where they witnessed the troops of the Chinese voluntary army filing along the closed northwest road. We were amazed that the war in the south was regarded as so significant when they went in the other direction. The American military commander attempted to meet the threat of the Chinese and North Korean forces in the northeast mountainous region and knowing this, the Chinese and Korean troops tried to encircle the Americans in preparation for a raid.

This embassy and other embassies took up quarters for several days together in the town of Supon. From there, the ambassadors traveled through Chinese territory and went in due course to one central region in North Korea and were concentrated in the little city of Manpu. We passed the anniversary of the great historical October Revolution by organizing a celebratory reception with our comrades in the Party and the government.

During this period, we stayed temporarily in Shinju which the American imperialists continually bombed and thus destroyed nearly 80% of the city. After this, the responsible comrades from our embassy were ever on the alert and were ready to tidy up important documents and things and then quickly hide from the air raids while at the same time continuing to work. One morning, however, eight huge American B-29 planes attacked the city of Manpu, and fire spilled out all over, burning much of the city. Since both the officials and ordinary people had nowhere to live, they found shelter and spent their days and nights in holes dug into the mountains or coastal ravines and the hollows of cliffs. In these very trying conditions, one had to seize life with all one's patience.

During this difficult time, there were many war orphans among the Korean people and although many people suffered disasters, the Party and the State inspired complete confidence, and people did not become discouraged but acted heroically. With great but careful effort, the whole country worked for the local farmers during a pause in the bombing, tirelessly helping them, like lake birds, to plant their rice seed.

At the same time, great work was done in this difficult region as the Party and State built many heavy machinery industries in underground areas and quickly assembled underground shelters for protection. I saw with my own eyes how right the country was and how our Korean brothers struggled to defend themselves against the hateful aggressor, and I admired the strength shown in such a struggle.

At the end of 1950, the Free People's Military, with the help of the Soviet Union's strong weapons and technology and the united forces of the

Chinese volunteer army, attacked the south to free the country. During this war, a variety of deadly weapons gave deadly blows in liberating Pyongyang, which had been cut off by the powerful imperialist enemy who was chased southwards toward Seoul. In the midst of this victory, the first column of gifts from our country arrived in Pyongyang while I, as Ambassador, with Purev, my Korean interpreter, left Manpu and went by car to Pyongyang, where the Central Committee of the Labor Party and its secretary and government leaders held a meeting. The Mongolian people issued a gift from our government for victory, and we offered a banner and celebrated the friendship between the two countries. We prepared to give ten thousand pairs of felt boots, twenty thousand pairs of work boots, twenty thousand pairs of padded shirts and pants, forty five thousand nine hundred pieces of children's clothing, forty five hundred military coats, ten thousand gloves, skin coats, and jackets, and twenty six thousand military *deels*.

Before the war, the city of Pyongyang included north, south, and central Pyongyang with its central Party headquarters. Beautiful and large palace-like buildings that reflected both art and culture were all destroyed in this imperialist war. In addition, the electric lines were ruined in the war, which prevented the trolleys and trams from running along their tracks, and South Pyongyang now looked like a country village. Seeing all of this was heart rending, and it was clear that this ancient city would have to be reconstructed. After that, imperialist America pursued with hatred the Korean People's Republic, and in revenge used all sorts of tactics like airplanes converted to bombers breaking the cease fire.

In April, 1951 our embassy, along with all the other embassies, decided to move from Manpu city, more than twenty kilometers north from Pyongyang, to the entrance to a small and narrow mountain ravine, where war planes could not directly penetrate and couldn't fire off bombs. Though the planes could fly directly over us, we would be passed by and could remain in the clear.

On the thirtieth anniversary of the Mongolian People's Republic, we had a pleasant meeting with the Central Committee of the Korean Labor Party in Pyongyang, in a building perhaps sixty meters deep underground. A reception to celebrate this anniversary was held, and Comrade Kim Il-Song, the Party leader and head of state, and many local leaders, organizers, and members of the diplomatic corps attended. Similarly, the Korean government held a national festival in the Moronbon theatre about seventy five meters deep, where workers had built a theatre platform. I visited Pyongyang several years later and saw many palace-like buildings had been erected, and there had arisen a magnificent culture in this new, unrecognizable, and flourishing city.

There were many orphan children who were victims of the war, and so the Central Committee of the MPRP made the important decision with the

embassy and with the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs that two hundred of the orphan children should be cared for and raised in Mongolia. In accordance with this decision, the Korean embassy organized talks about the orphans, and one hundred and ninety four in total went to Pyongyang, where our Minister of People's Enlightenment Jamsran with the woman council leader Lham arrived, accompanied by a Korean-speaking teacher as an escort. All celebrated while they waited for the train to Ulaan Baatar, and preparations were made for those looking after the children. The adults taught lessons in general education, and after the war was over and peace time arrived, the Deputy Minister from the Ministry of People's Enlightenment, Khorloo, returned the children to their native land.

At the end of December, 1951 the Central Committee of the MPRP devoted its seventy-sixth resolution to preparing a gift from the Mongolian people to their brothers, the Korean people. The leading representative Damba, with Badam Lhamsuren, Dorjii Gendendarjaa, and Chuluubat Burma ordered the People's Army to send eight thousand one hundred and eighty three tons of food, more than thirteen million four hundred and seventy one thousand *tugriks* worth of valuable items such as fifty three hundred tons of wheat, twenty two thousand four hundred and eighty eight tons of beef and mutton, ninety nine tons of sausage, ninety five tons of fat, eight tons of confectionary, more than one hundred and sixty tons of white rice, and two hundred tons of flour. These gifts were prepared in the Chойбалсан center in Dornod *aimag*, and General Janchiv and I worked together with people to form a long train column, which would arrive in Pyongyang. A representative from the Korean Party and the government directed people to meet us personally, but the People's Army and its commander in the official area had our representative wait to receive the honor of a celebration because they had to go at once to the factory which made the cannons and other guns and work to prevent the air raids in this war. A general, an officer, and a soldier came to greet us warmly as each gift was delivered to the people at a meeting, and the Central Committee of the MPRP, the government, and the Mongolian people were also warmly greeted as brothers and after that the well deserved flag was given to the Party Central Committee. Thus, our Party representative met again with the government leaders and talked further about the importance of strengthening and promoting friendship between the two countries. After that, they met as friends to talk about the historic significance of smashing the enemy and winning the war.

Meanwhile the Central Committee of the MPRP and the Council of Ministers praised the bitter struggle of the heroic Korean people in the aggressive war waged by the American imperialists in which the Mongolian people had donated a group of horses, which were given over to the Manju station by the Interior Deputy Minister, Comrade Jamyan. The head of the military school, General Damdinkhu, was responsible for transportation, and the first col-

umn of horses was sent by train. The Korean People's Free Military awaited the many horses and rushed toward a mountain cliff where the enemy lay in waiting, and they beat the enemy with the Korean People's army leader riding a special mount. There was great praise spoken for all the military.

Later our people, under the leadership of the Central Committee of the MPRP and the embassy council, carried out their own international responsibility in this noble and just war, which was a heroic struggle for victory. Our gift added more than forty three thousand nine hundred horses, nine thousand and ninety four breeding cattle and sheep, and one hundred and seventy three thousand goats and was coordinated with my comrades Jamyan, Damdinkhu, and Baljiniam, as well as veterinarians, animal scientists and the best herders. At the Manjur station, the animals were handed over to the responsible people of the Korean People's Republic, and our comrades looked after the animals making sure they did not run out of food and water.

By the decision of the Central Committee of the MPRP, our gift was to be delivered by the First Deputy to the embassy council's First Deputy Sürenjav, the leading representative Lhamsüren Jamian, and the ambassador Ravdan who would go to Pyongyang city. The Korean People's Republican Party and the government with its friendly people arranged a meeting, which was held in the city near the cannon unit. The leader and a soldier presented a welcome banner and arranged a celebration for the many soldiers and military, all of whom were awarded the well deserved Star medal.

In a city to the east, our representatives visited a military weapons factory. The industrial leader was an important figure with technical qualifications whom I met along with other people. They greeted our gift happily in their efforts to win a victory, and the MPRP's government Star medal was awarded, and then our representative returned to Pyongyang where he attended the party for Comrade Kim Il-Song in the underground hall in the Moronbon theater. The Defense Ministry, the People's Army leader, officers, and distinguished soldiers were there to celebrate the heroes, and then the MPRP and the Mongolian government awarded the Star medal to two hundred and eighty six deserving people. Our representative also gave, as part of the gift, eleven five-sided equipped felt *gers*, fifty thousand treated sheep skins, more than five hundred woven blankets, two hundred military saddles, twenty five thousand kidskin items, eight thousand suede or chamois leather boots, and five hundred kilograms to make fourteen thousand three hundred halters or hobbles as well as necessary medicines. During this difficult time of war, our people helped and thought of our brothers, the Korean people, by sending them what they needed.

In September, 1951 the Ambassadors from the People's Republic of Mongolia made the decision to appoint me Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which released me from the responsibilities of the ambassadorship. To celebrate my return to my native land, the leaders of

the Upper Assembly of the Korean People's Republic awarded me the First Star medal. I was received by the Head Secretary of the Central Committee of the Korean Labor Party and the ambassadors from the cabinet of the leader, Comrade Kim Il-Song, who repeated mentioning the benefit from the horses and that the sheep and cattle were handed over to the labor co-operatives or *negdels*.<sup>3</sup> In order to breed them well, they were interested to hear how the herds were tended and grazed by the Mongolian people in pastures. The talk among us was friendly. After meeting with the officials of the government and the national parties of the people from the embassies of the socialist countries, I returned to the Motherland and awaited my orders.

During this interval, there was an election to the MPRP Great Khural and time after time I was selected from my party as a continuously trusted delegate to the People's Great Khural or Parliament. Respect for enlightenment and knowledgeable responses to ideas about work were necessary in teaching and mobilizing the people.

More than seventy years ago, I lived among ordinary herders in the State, growing up from a young age under the brutal feudal rule and working arduously like a serf until the People's Revolution, when rights for the people flourished and the road to a happy life was built. Using this opportunity, I wanted to share the paths of my life of implementing wise decisions of our dear Party and issue several words and thoughts to my younger brothers. Thanks to our People's Revolution, which had a victorious birth in our city and came to be known in the countryside where it promised a bounteous life, many young people developed a loyalty to the MPRP, which strongly united them. The new program fostered by the Party had the goal of promoting knowledge for our glorious young people, and it had the bold ability to increase the mobilization and create a vigorous and successful organization, which we can trust and admire. We have a long history of many difficulties which have been overcome, and these traditions and efforts must be honored and treasured by our young people. Our brave endeavors must be inherited, and the young people should devote their own labor and efforts to the development of the Motherland. Our many thousands of young people aimed to use their time to study and achieve success in all areas, as well as taking an active part in all branches of the socialized industry in the Motherland, including herding and the agricultural economies. They also studied for a profession in the cultural, artistic, or scientific areas and attempted to fulfill these aims honorably while, at the same time, enriching their spirits.

In this country the girls and boys have sharp eyes and quick minds. They compete for an education and knowledge so they can have the talent to master a profession. However, this should not lead to their complacency,

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3. Collectives in the herding economy.

and they need to struggle to be important examples of professional people to their children. The economy and the cultural areas in our country each have their own demands for the worker.

It took patience, hardiness, strict discipline, and effort for the State in trying to create satisfactory labor and educational conditions, which would foster labor and learning and lead to the development of an intelligent and educated person. The older generation had devoted their lives to the cause of the People's Revolution, and it acted heroically in the struggle for the Motherland and a happy life in the future. It is difficult for people to accommodate to an historical period, and the efforts of our young people must be honored and treasured. These warriors and their brave inheritance have flourished as has the development of the socialist Motherland, all of which, with the devoted worker warriors, are to be treasured and honored.

The genius Frederick Engels advised "labor makes the man." Our people were dominated by foreign occupiers, the secular clergy, and the feudal nobility, which created double oppression as our people were exploited and lived in poverty.

Our forefathers spent much time as brave workers, and such constructive work will continue. The Mongolian workers and herders stand out over many centuries for their much favored labor and culture. Our youth should pay attention to these specific experiences as well as relying on their own sophistication for their success. We must strive to promote hard work, as well as figuring out ways to work more efficiently for the success of the Motherland. All this work sharpens the mind. However, each day's routine should not be perceived as enough, and people should concentrate on social concerns so as not to fall behind.

The MPRP and the government worked to lighten the burdens of labor, and each year in industry there were improvements in technical machinery. Specialized technical and mechanical engineers should handle, promote, estimate, and overfill the norms, and in so doing win the Party's approval.

From olden times and from a young age, our herders worked in the herding economy and studied to gain experience in working with their animals. And through talented and difficult labor they studied how to raise and increase the size of the herds, while devoting their lives unflaggingly to the yield of the herds and their protection from nature both day and night. So many experienced herders were well-known in their *khoshuus* and *khoroos*. Now we rely on this rich heritage of experience in our socialist era, where the success of their labor is highly valued by both the Party and the State, which regard them as heroic workers, and the many well-known herders are seen as born of merit. They have amassed rich experience, and the work of our rising brave youth can successfully draw on the cultural heritage of this

older generation. The fundamental branch of the economy is herding, and one must look at the skills of the older generation with its tireless, experienced herders whose methods today can be used in enriching the herds and managing their medical needs and preventing wasted time.

Our herds, with the birth of young animals year after year, are an inexhaustible property. Our agricultural economy booms with success through their careful management, and it will support the development of the country's industrial and cultural sectors. At the time of the complete development of socialism and the transition to communism in the Motherland and when herding methods will be highly developed, there is no doubt that we will still need to learn from the elders since herding will still be essential.

In all of the country, the youth voluntarily went to the *negdels* in the countryside to work in the herding economy and to become successful by earning wages. They then set themselves up profitably in the *ail*—such is the good life for the young. Not only must the youth manage to finish school and understand the importance of the herding economy, but in the *negdels* they must also learn to agree and co-operate because in the *negdel* mutual dependence is essential in caring for the herds. Those who are talented can take time off to attend a professional training school to study animal husbandry and continue to educate and refine their skills, all of which is praiseworthy.

Our herders also engaged in creative work which went beyond animal husbandry. They were very creative, spoke for themselves, and created everything they needed such as clothes and their own supplies. For example, the nomadic objects like the felt tent, the wooden roof ring for the tent, the tent poles, and the decorative objects like the wall, the wooden door, the chest, the containers, the table-chest, the saddle tree, the manure rake, and the dung box made from bent wood were artfully created, and the iron, copper, silver and brass ornaments made with screws and bolts, were all superior works of artistry. The women in the household had to sew and decorate the necessary clothes suitable for all four seasons of the year. They also had to make saddle flaps and quilted saddle cloth for the saddle, as well as a cloth to prevent camels from chafing under their riding saddles. Each of these articles had to be artistically sewn and decorated, and many people were adept at embroidery, papier-mâché, and appliqué.

Now it is said that our artistic work is from our ancestors, and it is adopted by our talented young people. The girls inherited a quick wit for the invention and development of nice designs. On behalf of Mongolian folk material culture, all of the above arts are important. Our people from ancient times taught their children from a young age to see that work is honored, and that modesty, honesty, and discipline—all customs in the social order—are embraced. People paid attention to the maxim "Learn by

working, not by playing" which is taught in the *ail* and the *aimag* by mothers and fathers to their children who become accustomed to this discipline.

Children from the ages of five or six accompanied their mother or father to herd the lambs and calves, milk the sheep, and tend the goats. They learned how to recognize the herds and how to become sharp eyed herders by their parents' teachings and their demands and scoldings. Father and mother taught their children how to strengthen the herds by finding suitable fresh green grassy pastures, water, and salt marsh (soda) as well as how to move the herds. They were also instructed how to work with an unbroken horse or ride camels to make them change their bad tempered behavior and become gentler while still maintaining their spirits.

It was necessary for the public to work this way because one couldn't have unbroken herds, and all mounts were useful as milking animals if they were productive. This experience is needed by the youth who have to handle all this work. The young people have to be comfortable with all five types of livestock, as well as knowing how to get manure for fuel, prepare water, and set up the caravan transport and the hunt during the migration. And in free time they need to take care of treating the sheepskins and currying the hides, plaiting a hobble or halter, twisting strands for rope, building a *khashaa* in the *khoroo*, and beating the camel wool into felt. The water in each locality has to be managed peacefully with the support of the *bag* and the *sum*. Thus at this time children exemplified the adages "the child is the father to the man" or "just as the twig is bent, the tree is inclined" said the parents who always supervised the work of their children. The Mongolian people passed on to their descendants the proper way to study and be examined.

Mothers and fathers deserved the honor and respect as workers and as teachers of their children in such widespread practices as leading their herds to fresh pastures, helping animals give birth, and taking note of the daily natural changes that occur in the treatment of the livestock in all four seasons. However, if youth were lazy and shirked work now and again, people were disgusted and scolded them saying, "even if you try to move, you sit like a rock and when you eat, you eat like a wild animal."

Of old, our herders had a very special and friendly relationship with the collectives. In summer and fall, families camped near each other for the milking time of the lambs, and you shared your knowledge and made sure your infertile animals bred. Your animals had to be fattened up in good pastures, fresh milk had to be gathered, *airagh* fermented, well water found, and felt made. In winter and spring, all people went in a caravan on the migration with their herds. They needed to work together to restore the winter campsite, search for lost animals, prepare food and drink for the winter, and take turns organizing the allotment of the herds. In this type of co-operative labor, we voluntarily helped our comrades in their work. There were some unsociable people who didn't participate in this labor,

and they were thought to lead selfish and nasty lives and were admonished by the public.

At this time, the people's education was a public matter since all people learned from society. It is good for everyone to become cultured, study and get a professional education, and specialize narrowly. This is particularly true for today's talented but struggling youth since industry, agriculture, and the many branches of cultural life demand those who are highly skilled but are also able to handle broadly based knowledge—qualities which enable them to become forward looking leaders.

There were many demands from our Party and the government to provide the best educated and prepared people, so from a young age, attention was paid to each child in terms of the State's resources for lower, middle, and advanced education. Grandchildren had to be educated for profitable labor and herding, as well as for a fresh role in the State so that people would have satisfying lives. In addition, one had the honorable duty of paying back the State and in so doing, everyone's lives became prosperous. This must always be remembered and observed so that each person could become a respected citizen.

Our Motherland aims to develop the highest quality scientific education for its young people so they can capably handle all matters of technology. All of our students must complete lower, middle, and special professional schools to be certified. They are responsible for doing their work for which they can rely on their many strengths while they strive for successful lives. They also need to use each minute well, seize every opportunity to read each published book, and, as our Comrade Yu. Tsedenbal reminds us, think about the progress of our national development.

Every responsible person, in addition to fulfilling these duties, should refresh both his theoretical and practical knowledge that is related to his profession by reading books and publications and using his mind. As our teacher Lenin said: "Study, study, and again study." The up and coming youth are at the best age to absorb and evaluate their education for themselves and study for a mastery, which will enrich the work they do. It is their responsibility, which they may not appreciate, to use their knowledge well so they can develop those capabilities, which will be invaluable to the nation.

In all of this, there is the reminder that the one important point for socialist citizens in any education or profession is to build a society for the people with modern leaders who offer an intellectual and scientific education to its people based on the deep study and understanding of Marxism-Leninism, all of which will enlighten the world. The patriot's view of contemporary life is that each person must have a profound understanding of how to carry out work. The heroic older generation struggled to be exemplary people, and each person spread the promotion of the Motherland in order to create

workers who were knowledgeable and successful. Our younger generation will face both benefits and fresh demands and need to focus on learning and specialized knowledge. We will develop a foundation for successful work in the Motherland by training people who are smart and shall see our culture develop and living conditions rise.

All of the work in our country becomes the foundation of our country's development because of the contributions of the people whose lives continually progress. Presently, our country's economy has grown because the cultural and technical knowledge of the people has become more advanced every day. The forthcoming generation of young people, in response to the patronage and love of our Party and State, should voluntarily meet all the needs of our beloved country.

Our people are sincere comrades who gain support from the Soviet people and are bound together like the revered older and younger brothers in protecting, promoting, and strengthening each other. The brave Soviet people lent a generous hand in our rich development of activities and work. This enthusiastic warrior of labor must be repaid for his generous work with a similar kindness. Our brave, glorious, bright, and talented young people and our leader have the goals of building and developing some new force to strengthen the reputation of our country, and consolidate and celebrate the friendship with our brothers in the socialist countries where a strong working class is being developed. Freedom of movement for all, the promotion of peace throughout the world, and following strictly the principles of the historical friendship of the international proletariat must be observed.

Our youth, our Party, and our government are to be deeply trusted, and it is an honor for our students to go to foreign countries to work, study for a profession, and gain knowledge. The young should be instructed to study, be disciplined, and use their free time well since their parents and older brothers and sisters expect them to be in the forefront of their nation.

The State, public property, and life must be protected, each person must be polite to his comrades, and every person should be compassionate and understand his own mistakes and take the initiative to correct them. While accruing knowledge and work experience, one should stay out of trouble and be attentive and not careless in all work. One should neither scorn nor ignore advice, nor chase after fame, nor indulge in gossip, nor loaf about, nor crave spirits and wine, nor treasure public property, nor break up a home or marriage. Even though these situations are disagreeable and cause disgust for many people, they must be heeded. Our youth must abandon these qualities and be healthy, wise, and pure.

In the above mentioned pages, I have devoted myself to conveying my thoughts to my younger brothers and sisters which can serve as an example for their education and work.



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I have chosen to cite principally Western-language sources to provide a context for understanding Sambuu's life and career. The most telling and less propagandistic personal accounts about him derive from his own writings, which are mentioned in the essay, recent interviews, and some of the writings below. Specialists may want to look at the interviews of Tsogt-Ochir Lookhuuz conducted by I. Lkhagvasüren and Yuki Konagaya in I. Lkhagvasüren and Yuki Konagaya, eds., *The Twentieth Century in Mongolia (2): Political Life in Socialist Mongolia* (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2007); Jargalsaikhan's autobiography cited in the footnotes; and the writings of Sambuu's adopted daughter Udval, among other Mongolian works.

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*Note:* Sambuu mentions hundreds, perhaps as many as a thousand, personal names and geographic sites, which he barely identifies. Because they play almost no role in his narrative, I have omitted many of them from the index.

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